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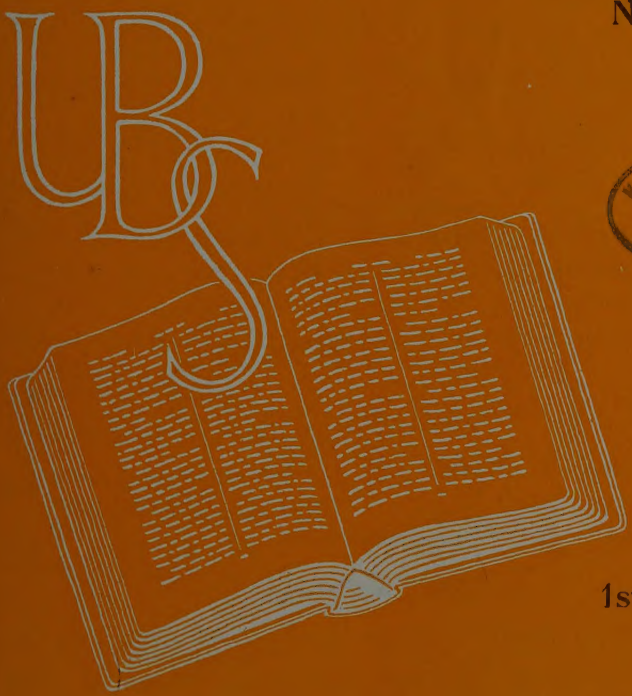

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

FIRST QUARTER - 1955

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Contributors to this Issue

REV. JOHANNES ADLER is Theological Secretary of the Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft zu Berlin (Berlin Bible Society).

REV. PAUL CAUFRIEZ is General Secretary of the Belgian Bible Society.

DR. EMIL DIEHL is Manager of the Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt (Stuttgart Bible Society).

REV. J. ERIC FENN is Editorial Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

MR. GEORGE KLADIS is Secretary of the Joint A.B.S.-B.F.B.S. Greek Sub-Agency.

MR. J. C. F. ROBERTSON is Secretary for the A.B.S. and B.F.B.S. in the Far East.

BIBLE SOCIETY & REFORMATION IN LATIN AMERICA

by Olivier Béguin

BIBLE distribution and evangelism are intimately related to each other in Latin America. This is quickly evident to the least informed visitor. Indeed, Bible colporteurs and Bible Society men were pioneer evangelical workers in that area and names like Thompson, Milne, Penzotti, Tucker, are highly respected in all evangelical circles. The first named was an educationalist and a hundred and thirty years ago had a hand in many official attempts made by the recently born " Latin " republics to develop popular education. He even has a street named after him in Buenos Aires.

Britain had the Lollards ; France and Italy the Waldensians and the biblical " port-balle " of the sixteenth century ; Latin America had the colporteurs. They too, like their predecessors in other countries, have known and even still meet with hardship, persecution and martyrdom as they carry out their ministry.

After three hundred years of hispano-portuguese occupation, Latin America at the beginning of the nineteenth century emerged from her feudal period of history. What Greek and Roman antiquity meant for sixteenth century Europe, the French " Siècle des Lumières," Rousseau in particular, and the American War of Independence meant for Latin America last century. Europe had the Renaissance half a millenium ago. A hundred years ago Latin America started its own Renaissance. The Holy Scriptures have now taken their place in this historical process, just as they did at the time of Luther and Calvin in Europe. At the dawn of its modern history, Latin America in turn also began to become acquainted with the Bible, with the Word of God. Fortunately in our time Bible distribution work can count on powerful and devoted Bible Societies which did not exist for Europe four or five hundred years ago. Gospels and Testaments can be produced for the colporteurs and the churches in quantities and at prices which were unthinkable at the time when the Gutenberg Bible had just been printed. This means that Bible distribution can be carried out at quite a different pace in Latin America from what was possible at pre-reformation and reformation times in Europe, and to-day it is possible to circulate millions of Gospels and hundreds of thousands of Testaments and Bibles each year, instead of the few thousand or tens of thousands of cumbersome volumes which came from the primitively equipped (according to our modern standards) printing works in Europe at a corresponding epoch in its history.

Yet basically the situation is the same. Latin America is just as thirsty and as ready for the Water of Life as Europe was when the first Bibles in the vernacular began to appear. The Bible Societies have almost unlimited opportunities for the spreading of the printed Word. In Brazil there has been a permanent shortage of 2-300,000 Bibles—complete Bibles—during the last few years. Distribution there is still rationed by this factor of insufficient Scriptures being available. Two months of missionary preaching by a Pentecostalist missionary earlier this year in Buenos Aires resulted in emptying the shelves of the Bible Society agency, and the Chile agent had an almost similar experience a year or two earlier on a corresponding occasion. Even in hard-pressed Colombia Scripture sales had increased up till last July, the latest date for which figures are available. Colporteurs and Bible Society agents have plenty of stories to tell of churches and small Christian communities having come together in completely

unevangelised places after the visit of a colporteur and the sale of a few Gospels or of one Bible. " It is no legend," as Dr. Charles Turner once wrote, " that literally scores and scores of present day strong evangelical churches in Latin America sprang up and came into existence around a copy of the Word of God." (La Biblia en America Latina p. 105.) It is no legend and it was a thrill for me, during my visit to the Peruvian coastal area, to have the opportunity of visiting one of these communities, poor, with no clergyman, not very numerous in membership, but hardworking, proud of its little church recently erected, warm in its fellowship and eager in praising the Lord for His compassion and His grace.

But if Latin America is experiencing her reformation period, there are signs too of a counter-reformation here and there. The evidence is violent and bloody in Colombia, less systematic and open in other areas. I was interested to read in a survey of Latin-American catholicism published a few years ago by Father John J. Considine, under the title " Call for 40,000 " (meaning 40,000 priests needed in Latin America), the following sentence which sums up his judgment about Colombia : " It is certainly true that among the nations of the New World, Colombia, thanks to her Catholic governments, is the most advanced in missionary works." And the author also underlines how Roman Catholics in Colombia are more socially-minded than in many other countries. Since that book was written, other countries—Brazil in particular—have seen a remarkable influx of new Roman Catholic forces, priests and missionaries, and here also one gets the impression that a counter-reformation might be on its way.

This situation clearly implies an immense responsibility for the Bible Societies. One of the reasons which facilitated the progress and success of the counter-reformation in many parts of Europe must certainly be seen in the relative scarcity of Scriptures available at that time. Such a reason does not need to exist for Latin America. The more widely the Holy Scriptures can be spread, the more solidly rooted will be the Latin American reformation. The churches and Christian communities in the southern American hemisphere are most conscious of the importance of using the Scriptures in their evangelistic activity. They know that what people need in Latin America is not human theories but God's Word in its fulness and purity. They therefore concentrate most of their efforts on the distribution and the interpretation of the printed Gospel. And the whole question is : will the Bible Societies have sufficient supplies available? The secretary of the Bahia Auxiliary of the Brazilian Bible Society reported at the second Triennial Assembly of the Society last June, that the Auxiliary had displayed forty-thousand small posters " Read the Bible " for the last Bible Sunday, and dropped fifty-thousand leaflets with the same text from an aeroplane. But they had not one Bible to sell! At that meeting the refrain was continually repeated, echoing voices from all parts of the country : " More Bibles ; we need more Bibles." On the answer given to such pleas may depend much of the future of that so-called " Continent of to-morrow."

It would certainly be misleading if the above account of historical rapprochement were taken as applying too generally. In spite of the many analogies, there are deep differences. However, they do not alter what is said above regarding the urgent task of the Bible Societies. If anything, they would rather make the need and the call even more pressing.

The great and main weakness of the present Latin American reformation is that it has been imported. During the last 150 years two great changes have taken place in world politics. Modern nationalism and marxian-communism

have come to life and to power. Both deeply affect the situation in Latin America. Both are potential arguments, or are in fact used as arguments, against the activity of the evangelical groups, churches and organisations. Militant Protestantism is an anglo-american import. (The German Lutherans have so far hardly shown any evangelistic activity outside their own linguistic vicinity.) Its aggressive attitude is objected to in the spiritual or ecclesiastical field in the same way that former European, now mainly north American, economic imperialism or predominance are regarded resentfully and occasionally shaken off. Oddly enough, when evangelicals are not accused of being the instruments of anglo-american capitalism, they are misrepresented as communists or " fellow travellers." But whatever the accusation is, it appeals (sometimes most effectively!) to those latent xenophobian and reactionary feelings which can be found everywhere in Latin America as well as in other parts of the world. Although used only sporadically today, these " arguments " are a real sword of Damocles for the evangelical minorities. Even when they do not lead to violence, they are apt to discredit badly in the mind of the people the reformation movement which has now started.

For Bible Society work this means primarily two things. First, that local production should be encouraged and strengthened as much as possible. For some time, Bibles have been printed in Brazil by the Baptist Press. Last June I saw the first page proofs of the first Portuguese Bible to be printed in that country by the Bible Societies. So far only Portions and Testaments had been produced locally. For the Spanish-speaking areas all books are still imported from abroad. Local production would be a problem more difficult to solve than in the case of Portuguese, since Spanish is spoken in all Latin American republics with the exception of Haiti and Brazil, and they would not each wish to produce for their own use. Yet it is a matter that needs serious consideration today.

Secondly, the Latin American churches should become more and more conscious of their own reponsibility for the moral and financial support of Bible Society work. The rapid increase in local contributions in several countries and the creation of a new Society in Brazil and of Advisory Committees in Argentina and Mexico, show that this support can be aroused. It might be encouraged and attempted elsewhere. And it would be wrong to think that such organisations, where they exist and where I saw them (I did not visit Mexico), are heads without bodies. I wish that many of our U.B.S. members could count on such fervent and wide support and interest among their constituencies and that cities of three or four hundred-thousand inhabitants in our Protestant countries could produce such large and exhilarating gatherings as did the Roman Catholic dominated Rosario or Cordoba in Argentina during the time of my visit. There three and even five speakers were not too many, and series of addresses lasting for two hours on the Bible and the work of the Bible Societies were not too long. Latin America is not only ready for the Word of God ; she is also ready to make an effective contribution to the work of the Bible Societies.

Of course, this last statement has to be somewhat qualified as far as the Andean Republics are concerned. I spent a week in Peru—much too short a visit for all there is to be seen and learned there ; enough to become convinced that conditions in that area are much harder than on the eastern side of the Andes. Conditions on the land and in the mines are still almost feudal : a wealthy minority of Creoles or foreigners on the one hand, and on the other a

mass of poverty-stricken, illiterate Indians, sometimes living in conditions not far removed from serfdom. Yet advanced social legislation sometimes puts a heavy burden on urban industry and offices, without always really serving the needs of those it is designed to benefit. The evangelical churches are small, scattered, poor. There are very few trained ministers (besides the foreign missionaries) and only a certain number of evangelists and church leaders with a Bible school preparation ; many congragations are without a pastor. Even Roman Catholicism has not penetrated the masses deeply or has lost its grip. In 1825 there were some 400 priests in these areas ; today less than 30.

This is the second main qualification I should like to make to the historical parallel suggested above. For large areas of Latin America one should not so much speak of a reformation as of genuine pioneer missionary work. This would be true of large sections of the Andes as well as of the major but very sparsely populated part of Amazonia.

I was surprised at the weakness of the churches in Peru and, as far as I could see, of the missionary effort. It is true that entrance into the country is barred to missionaries. Yet even some of those who are in the country do not seem to receive from the parent body all the support required to enable them to make the utmost use of their abilities and of their forces.

In the midst of such conditions, Bible Society work presents a quite different character from that shown on the east coast, or even in the Caribbean area. It is still in its pioneer stage. Local support is almost non-existent and will remain so for a while. Yet whatever the Bible Societies can do to increase Scripture distribution, and to help the congregations in their missionary drive, will help to establish more deeply the Church of Christ in that hard soil and to lead many to the feet of the Lord. For it remains clear that even if conditions are somewhat different, the thirst for God's Word and the need for its dissemination are just as great as in the rest of Latin America.

Latin America claims a high place in the list of priorities in Bible Society support. The harvest is ripe. To let it wait would be fatal. Of course, other areas of the world have just as great and as urgent needs. Conditions, however, may not be as critical. If the reformation wins through in Latin America, and for that they need the Bible, this area will soon be an additional source of help for the missionary distribution of the Scriptures in the rest of the world. The Lord of the harvest has promised that He will send his labourers ; let us pray for this, as Jesus told us to do.

NOTES ON EQUATORIAL AFRICA

The following notes are based on the report made by the Rev. J. T. Watson, following his visit to West and Central Africa in 1954. *They give some indication of the situation of Bible Society work in the countries visited and recent decisions taken by the British and Foreign Bible Society to meet immediate needs.*

"AMONG the areas in which the Christian Church faces large opportunity to-day, three stand out because of their immense size and importance : Africa, India and South America "—states the popular report of the B.F.B.S. for 1954. The same report reminds the reader that in less than a generation

tribesmen in Africa have had to learn how to handle complicated machines and to move from patriarchal conditions to industrial life; that the Gold Coast has now almost become self-governing and Nigeria is moving rapidly forward in the same direction; and that in this complicated and changing situation there is an open door for the Christian Gospel and a ready ear for the Bible.

The report brought back by Mr. Watson points out that everywhere in West and Central Africa Christianity is faced not only with paganism, animism and a growing secularism, but also with militant Islam. The Moslem faith, which first reached this part of Africa in the twelfth century, had taken root in some areas before Christianity came on the scene. "All along the trade routes," continues Mr. Watson, "in towns and trading posts up-country, and over great areas among many tribes, Moslem influence is strong, for here for centuries travelled the Moslem traders and slave-traders. It is estimated that in West Africa, out of a population of some 59½ million, nearly 37 million are pagan, over 20 million are Moslem and less than 3 million are Christian. The magnitude of the task facing the churches, missions and Bible Societies is evident." It is against such a background that the problem of Scripture circulation has to be assessed.

* * *

French West Africa

This enormous territory, half the size of Europe, but with a population of only 16 million people, is being evangelised by some twelve missionary societies linked together in a federation of Protestant missionary societies. Splendid work is undoubtedly being done, but there is everywhere opportunity for larger service. For example, in Senegal, which is the field of the Société des Missions Evangélique de Paris, and where the Moslem population is estimated at 60% of the total population, there are only two European missionaries at work. When it is remembered that the population of Dakar alone is 300,000, it will be realised how much there is to be done. The B.F.B.S. is arranging to print an edition of St. Matthew's Gospel in Jolof, the main language of the country, and a bookseller in Dakar is arranging to hold stocks of French and other vernacular Scriptures for sale to the Christians and to others wanting to possess copies. There are a considerable number of Portuguese-speaking people in this busy port, besides Africans from as far away as the Ivory Coast, Togo and Dahomey.

On the Ivory Coast two urgent problems confront the Bible Society: the production of Scriptures in languages which as yet have little translation work going on in them, and the provision of adequate arrangements for distribution. In this country where, following the Prophet Harris movement, there are many thousands of baptised Christians, there is as yet no complete vernacular Bible and only one New Testament—Baouli—published this year. There are New Testaments in Mossi and Red Bobo, but these are more properly Upper Volta languages.

Two factors complicate the linguistic situation. The first is the emphasis placed by the authorities on the use of French (which means that there is not a lot of encouragement given to would-be translators) and the second is the extraordinary multiplicity of languages on the Ivory Coast. It has been estimated that these number more than sixty. There is no readily agreed lingua franca, though it is hoped by some that Baouli may become one.

Sierra Leone

Here again one of the greatest problems facing the Bible Society in this country is that of language. The country itself is divided into two parts—the Colony, based on Freetown, the capital, and extending the length of a small peninsula some 25–30 miles, and the Protectorate. The people living in the *Colony* are mostly Creoles, who use English but speak a patois which has to be learnt by the European missionary ; this is a spoken language and a satisfactory written form of it has not yet been evolved. It therefore seems probable that the language of the Bible, the Prayer Book and the hymn book is not properly understood by the ordinary people, and certainly not by those in the villages. In the *Protectorate* thirteen languages are spoken, in none of which is there as yet a full Bible. The New Testament exists in Temne and the MS. of the Mende Testament is now printing. Unfortunately there are as yet few Mende or Temne ordained pastors and the Creole clergy who work in the Protectorate insist on using Creole when conducting services.

The B.F.B.S. is to appoint an African pastor to its staff as a full-time sub-agent in Sierra Leone. His duties will include travelling throughout the country, encouraging churches and missions to stock and circulate Scriptures. He will also seek to promote translation of the Scriptures.

Gold Coast

Since 80% of the education in West Africa has been in the hands of the Christian Church, the great majority of people who can read are Christians. The bookshops set up by the various missions in different places have opened for the Bible Society a ready-made means of distribution which hitherto has been quite adequate for meeting the need, and their industry and co-operation have resulted in an enormous circulation of Scriptures, and particularly of the Bible. Now, however, with the extension of education and literacy and, in the case of the Gold Coast, the achievement of self-government, Scripture distribution cannot be left solely to the Christian bookshops. Since up to the present the Bible is a prescribed text-book in most Gold Coast schools, it has had a steady guaranteed sale, but on the other hand sales of the New Testament and of Gospels have been small. As a first step towards encouraging the sales of these " evangelising " volumes, the B.F.B.S. has decided to increase the rate of discount allowed on Scriptures supplied to the Christian bookshops.

The absence of colporteurs and of any widespread publicity regarding Scripture publications in the past has meant that among the ordinary people there is at present little or no knowledge of the availability of Scriptures other than the complete Bible. The B.F.B.S. has therefore joined with the Christian Council in encouraging the appointment of two colporteurs who will shortly begin work for a trial period. It is also proposed to set up a Gold Coast Bible Society Advisory Council with the co-operation, among others, of the Rev. P. K. Dagadu, General Secretary of the Christian Council of the Gold Coast and recently appointed member of the U.B.S. Standing Committee. The appointment of Mr. N. H. Hunter as Secretary of the new B.F.B.S. West Africa Agency (see under Nigeria) will also bring encouragement to the work in the Gold Coast. In the meantime a Bible Society Auxiliary which was formerly active in the Gold Coast has recently been revived.

Nigeria

Scripture distribution in Nigeria, as in the Gold Coast, is at present carried out mainly through mission bookshops. In Nigeria, however, there are certain features in existing arrangements which restrict the number and kind of books

which can be handled in this way. One of the most urgent needs, therefore, is for a warehouse from which Scriptures can be quickly despatched to bookshops or mission stations. The B.F.B.S. has been fortunate in obtaining a site for such a warehouse in Lagos. The site is on what is known as the Apapa Estate—a much-sought-after area of reclaimed marshland—which is being developed with wharves and dock facilities. Lagos itself is the federal capital of the country and the centre for the Nigerian Christian Council and the western Nigerian Methodist District. The archbishop of the newly created Province of West Africa also lives here. It is here that the secretary of the new B.F.B.S. West Africa Agency, Mr. N. H. Hunter, will be located.

Congo

The Congo is another area which holds tremendous opportunity for the spreading of the Word of God. There are multitudes of people in this country, both black and white, who are quite outside the hearing of the Gospel. In spite of the excellent work of the missions, a tremendous task still faces the Christian Church, particularly in the large towns such as Leopoldville. There is no doubt, therefore, as to the timeliness of the appointment by the B.F.B.S. of the Rev. Anders Marthinson as secretary responsible for the work in the Congo Basin. Mr. Marthinson, who is stationed in Leopoldville, arrived there in early December last. The fact that he is Swedish will be an advantage, since many of the mission stations in that country are in the hands of Swedish missionaries. The Netherlands Bible Society and the Belgian Bible Society are also contributing towards Mr. Marthinson's work.

The B.F.B.S. is arranging for the printing of 10,000 copies of the Gospel of Mark in Kikongo, in the illustrated literacy edition.

* * *

Throughout his visits in Central and West Africa, the Rev. J. T. Watson was impressed with the hunger of the Church in that part of the world for the particular service which the Bible Society is able to render. In those places where its work is known, the Bible Society is held in high esteem and it was clear that any plans for development of its work would be supported enthusiastically by European and African Christian leaders alike. The achievement of the past one hundred and fifty years in terms of books issued and translations made is truly amazing. The Scriptures have been translated into more than three hundred African languages. The emphasis in Mr. Watson's report is on the need for intensification of effort during the next fifty-year period in equatorial Africa.

WHAT HAS THE THIRD JUBILEE MEANT?

by J. Eric Fenn

THE whole of 1954 has been observed in Great Britain as the Third Jubilee Year. The focal points were naturally the great events in London, beginning with the service in St. Paul's Cathedral, organised by the British Council of Churches, to launch the campaign " The Bible Speaks To-day " on October 20th, 1953, and ending with the Thanksgiving Service held in Westminster Abbey on December 6th, 1954 ; but all over the country celebrations were held at different times and Bible Weeks were organised, while the press and the B.B.C. gave wide publicity to many of the meetings. The presence in London

for the great celebrations in May of delegates from more than thirty countries and the tours undertaken by these overseas representatives (who addressed between them eight hundred meetings up to the end of July, representing a total of 116,000 people in the audiences and a sum of £10,400 contributed) ensured that the international character of the work was brought home to the people of Britain in a most effective way. What has all this meant in the life of the parent Society? Is it possible, as the Jubilee Year closes, to make any interim judgment on what has been achieved?

Any such assessment must necessarily be provisional but I think four results can be listed as of permanent value: the vast encouragement of the Jubilee, the provision of a stronger financial basis for future action, a clarification of vision and the education of the Home Auxiliaries. And all this provides the Society with a spring-board into the future, with all its pressing needs.

The encouragement has been real and deep. The fact that at each stage the Royal Family has shown itself actively interested in the work is itself immensely heartening. Princess Margaret attended the service at St. Paul's on October 20th; Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother came specially to Bible House to meet the overseas delegates on May 4th; the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were present at the Thanksgiving Service in the Abbey on December 6th. Not only so, but the Princess Royal attended the opening of the Exhibition "We Want to Live" in York during the summer while the Earl of Athlone was in the Royal Box at the Festival Hall, London, for the Jubilee Concert conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. Those who had dealings with the Palace or Clarence House concerning these events realised that the interest of the Royal Family was much more than formal: it was warm and intimate. Then, again, the messages received, either by word of mouth from our overseas visitors or by cable and letter, showed that in all parts of the world the Society was loved and honoured and served by an immense number of people; while at home the churches and the missionary societies and countless individuals testified in clear and unambiguous terms to the importance and urgency of the work for which the Society is responsible. The Council and Conference of the United Bible Societies at Haywards Heath and Eastbourne and the great meetings in the Central Hall, Westminster, on May 5th were eloquent of the reality of fellowship now existing between the British and Foreign Bible Society and the sister and daughter Societies which have come into existence since 1804. And this sense of international solidarity grew steadily as news came in of further celebrations in Holland, in France, in Germany, and further afield in Japan, in Africa, in India, in Latin America, in the Dominions and in the Lebanon.

The financial expression of this goodwill has been at times almost embarrassing and always moving. The great sums given and promised at the meetings in May by the Dominions and by the United States of America and the smaller even more eloquent gifts from Korea and India and those countries where poverty and insecurity make every gift a sacrifice—all this was humbling and yet a source of deep joy to all whose work lies in the London Bible House. The total result is a sum of well over £200,000 given to equip the Society for the tremendous decades which lie ahead.

The clarification of vision came partly as a result of the Haywards Heath and Eastbourne meetings of the United Bible Societies, partly from a gathering of British and Foreign Bible Society home and overseas staff held

over Whitsun, again at Eastbourne, and partly from those personal contacts and conversations which take place wherever people meet whose work lies in different parts of the world but whose hearts are at one in the faith. Vision is still partial, but it is clearer. We see, for example, the urgent opportunities before us in Africa and how to begin to meet them by setting up two new agencies in West Africa and the Congo Basin while strengthening those already in existence in East Africa and the Rhodesias. This is already in train. We see, too, the promise and strategic importance of India, Pakistan and Ceylon and at least some of the steps we can take to strengthen the hands of the leaders of the Bible Society there. We see also the challenge of poverty and the need greatly to increase our circulation and reduce the prices of our books for this area. In the field of translation also our eyes have been opened to new possibilities and to the need to speed up and extend the work ; for though the past achievement is spectacular, it is after all only a beginning—over a thousand languages remain untouched and the whole Bible exists in only two hundred tongues. We see more clearly also the need for a world strategy developed in harmony with that of other Societies and therefore the importance and potential usefulness of the United Bible Societies. Yet it is not only in relation to the overseas work of the Society that the Jubilee has given us fresh vision : the success—even though partial—of the "Bible Speaks Today" campaign in Britain was enough to prove that the time is more than ripe for a sustained effort to help our own people to a new understanding of the Bible. Bible Weeks were held in more than two hundred centres : some were good, some were bad and others middling, but all together pointed unmistakeably to a deep need and to the way in which it may be met. The need is to provide clergy and ministers with much more help in biblical preaching and the laity with help in their own reading and teaching of the Bible. The means which has been most fruitful has been the close co-operation between leaders of the British Council of Churches and the Bible Society. It was gratifying to learn that this example had received an echo in Evanston in the setting up of a permanent body, representative of the World Council of Churches and of the United Bible Societies to foster similar enterprises on a world scale. The truth has been borne in upon us that a Bible Society cannot at home, any more than in fact it does abroad, evade the responsibility for helping men to read the Book it seeks to make them buy. The problem is how to do this in a situation of more or less acute disagreement in the churches about the interpretation of the Scriptures and the nature of inspiration. Yet the experiments made during the Jubilee Year justify the belief that this can be done, given a certain degree of agreement and much more of mutual trust.

All this has increasingly involved a re-education of the Home Auxiliaries. It would be difficult to exaggerate the effect, for instance, of Mr. S. W. Kulubya from Uganda on the places he visited, or the combined impact of the delegation from India. The Rev. Young Bin Im from Korea left an indelible impression behind wherever he went. So also did Canon Chandu Ray and our Japanese friends. Any such list is invidious, for we owe an immense debt to all those who toured the country for us. It is not so much that people remember what was said (though many of them do) as that a visitor from overseas *embodies* in himself the international character of the work on which the Auxiliary has long been engaged, and thus gives it a new meaning. The fact, too, that often the press took notice of the meetings gave a new sense of being engaged on something which was not the private hobby of a few elderly people but something of real importance and interest to all, whether Church members or not. Literature has played a part in this re-education of the home constituency, but the greatest force has been the impact of significant personalities. We have,

of course, a long way still to go in this regard; but as we look back we see that we have come a very long way already.

And this all provides a spring-board into the future. In many parts of Britain it is clear that people are waiting with some eagerness to know what the Society will call them to next, a sense that something has been made possible in the Jubilee Year which they want to go on and complete. If this post-Jubilee aim can be given a clear enough and definite enough focus in a practical and understandable objective, one has a feeling that the latent response is enormous: and to do that is our next task.

For all this we are grateful first to God for His mercy and then to those friends in every part of the world whose interest and concern have been made so evident in this year of Jubilee.

A YEAR'S WORK IN THE STUTTGART BIBLE SOCIETY

by Emil Diehl

It is to the credit of the Evangelical Church that it restored to a place of honour the words of Jesus, who alone is our Lord and Master, and that, thanks to the reformation, it was able to re-establish the Word of God as the source of light and the unique foundation of the Church. This Word has stood the test for hundreds and thousands of years, through all the changes of time, as God's power which brings blessing to all who believe in it.

The Stuttgart Bible Society recognised that its task was to be a co-worker with the Evangelical Church. In offering the Holy Scripture, it has helped to introduce the joyful message to our people, to whatever group or class they belong. Looking over the past year from an external point of view, we can speak of a good, productive year's work. The inner results, the blessing which our work should bring, cannot be seen. We can only ask God that His Word, which has again been brought to our people by means of thousands of Bibles, may " not return void," but may bring comfort to troubled hearts, restore peace to those who are in difficulty and liberate those who are burdened with guilt.

During the past year we despatched 382,000 Bibles, 213,000 New Testaments and 166,000 Portions. This makes an average of 2,500 copies per day which went out from the Bible House. These editions were produced on our own premises, which have now been rebuilt. Our workshops—printing and binding works—are the heart of our Bible printing. They are the starting point from which we are enabled to fulfil our service, according to the basis of our work: " To offer the Bible so cheaply that it can come into the hands of the poorest."

Our Scriptures have reached our people like scattered seeds. They have found an entry into homes and families, refugee camps, schools, hospitals, prisons, homes for old people and others. A large number have been sent across frontiers and overseas, to our fellow-countrymen in other countries. There they form a link between the old and the new homeland.

It is worth noting that since 1948 many more complete Bibles are asked for in Germany than New Testaments alone. The whole Bible, Old and New Testaments, is wanted by the reader in order to enable him to fathom the full meaning of God's story of redemption.

Our work serves all those, without discrimination, who wish to have a Bible. This has meant that for a long time the Bible has had to be produced in a great variety of editions. Our new catalogue indicates 462 items. The friend of the Bible can find here Bibles at all price ranges, in the widest variety of sizes and prices, from the small " mustard-seed " edition to the large, dignified altar Bible, from the pocket Testament to the large-type editions, whose text can be read by the aged whose eyes are weak. We are thus able to say again that Scriptures now exist to meet all needs and that our low prices enable everyone to acquire this Book.

It should be said that we are continually making efforts to ensure that our Bibles should suit the taste of the times as far as their outward appearance is concerned. We try to see that the setting, printing and binding of our editions are such that the reader will also find pleasure in this aspect of the Bible. It is no simple matter to produce the Bible in such a way that both the dignity of the Book and modern technical developments are taken into account.

It was possible this year for a more important decision to be realised: the printing of the so-called Schäfer illustrated Bible, with its 350 black and white drawings by the well-known painter Rudolf Schäfer. The Stuttgart illustrated Bible was also completed, a book with 132 coloured pictures by Schäfer. There is always a large public who find these Bible illustrations helpful and stimulating. Our Württemberg marriage Bible has again been produced, as before, with the reproductions of pictures by the well-known masters Schnorr and Carolsfeld; we are certain also that this edition will be gladly received by families. Our Palestine illustrated Bible has been reprinted with 64 excellent coloured photos of the Holy Land.

What do we hope to achieve with all these editions? Our sole intention is to awaken and foster a love of Bible reading. This is also our aim with the " study Bible," which has now appeared, printed on writing paper and in which space has been allowed alongside and below the text for notes to be added. For those who wish to acquire such a Bible from us, the reading of the Bible is, no doubt, a serious matter. They wish to note everything of value which they come across which will give a true understanding of the text, or points which they themselves discover.

Alongside the Luther Bible, which is distributed widely and in large quantities, we are handling other German translations. The Menge Bible, the Schlachter miniature Bible, the New Testament of Thimme, are received gratefully. Recently we have also taken over the distribution of the Zürich Bible and of Albrecht's New Testament.

Our Jubilee Bible with notes, which we can again offer in large and small format, has for a long time been a friend of the Christian family. It was last revised in 1937, but must in the near future again be revised to bring the introduction and comments into line with Bible scholarship of today.

Our scholarly editions of the Bible in Greek, Hebrew and Latin have again had a good circulation in all countries. A group of specialists ensure that these editions are maintained at a high level of scholarship. Work on the Hebrew Word Concordance planned by us, and on the Greek Synopsis, a parallel edition of the Four Gospels in the originals, have all made considerable progress. We hope in the not too distant future to be able to offer these special editions, which are of importance to theologians, at a reasonable price.

We have again given our very special attention to the need of Bibles for the blind. Even for those who can see, a life without God is comfortless ; how much more so for the blind. For a number of decades we have been distributing the Jubilee Bible with explanatory notes in Braille, and are participating in the production of the Menge Bible also in Braille.

The task of collaborating in the distribution of the Bible in non-Christian countries is not the least of our preoccupations. We have not been able to undertake any missionary printing in the year covered by this report, but plans in this connection for the future are not lacking. D. Vielhauer is working at the present time with his native helper on the completion of the Old Testament in Bali, for the Cameroons. We hope to be able to print this Bible in 1955, in co-operation with the Bâle Mission.

Closely related to this task of the extensive production and distribution of the Bible, is still another ; to preserve the Word of God from being corrupted and to see that it is offered at all times in a form corresponding to the basic text and in a language that is understandable. This is a large and important work for the Bible Societies. The revision of the German Bible, started in the year 1922 on our initiative, is still in progress. The work often had to be interrupted. Nevertheless, the revised version of the New Testament will probably appear early in 1955. In addition, the Stuttgart Bible Society is issuing for Christmas a New Testament with the Luther text more extensively revised than can be expected from the official church revision. This new version of the Luther text is not intended in any way to supplant the one that has official recognition. But we hope to render a service to many friends of the Bible in offering them a special edition in which the attempt has been made to let Luther speak to our people in a new way. This revised Luther Testament will be illustrated with nearly 100 pictures by Wilhelm Steinhausen.

Up to a certain point we also regard it as our task to try to ensure that the Bible is really read. We seek to encourage the reading of the Bible in particular through our so-called " special editions." For example, our abridged Youth and Family Bibles, which we now produce again in large type and in a large format, in addition to the small edition, may succeed in leading the reader to the complete Bible. The " Story of Jesus," a " harmony " of the four Gospels which has just been reprinted, will speak to those people who scarcely know where to begin with the Bible and will lead them to a knowledge of the life of Jesus. Our small Bible booklets, with selections of quotations from the Bible, the number of which has greatly increased during the past year, are intended to convey the fundamentals of the Bible to the hard-pressed city dweller, and lead him also eventually to take the whole Bible in his hand and read it consecutively.

But for our part, we wish to promote not only a diligent reading of the Bible, but also a right understanding of it. The Jubilee Bible, to which reference has already been made, is above all intended to render this service, with its introductions and comments. In all our editions we insert an introduction to the right understanding of the Bible : this is the small pamphlet " Take and Read." The appendices which are to be found at the end of all our Bibles and New Testaments, provide answers to many of the questions which arise in reading the Bible.

Following the example of the large Bible Societies which are engaged in world-wide activity, we have during recent years started producing filmstrips about the Bible. These filmstrips give to pastors and teachers the possibility of showing, by means of pictures, the origins and development of the Bible, thus leading to a right understanding of it.

In co-operation with the Evangelical *Gemeindedienst* in Württemberg we are conducting an intensive " Bible mission." The leaders of this *Gemeindedienst* —pastors, parish workers, youth pastors, deacons—help to promote interest in and understanding of the Bible through lectures and the arranging of Bible study and courses. We distribute Bibles and New Testaments to refugees still in our Württemberg camps through the agency of the camp chaplains. Our new biblical material—leaflets of all kinds, as well as small Bible booklets with selected extracts, which we make available free of charge to people through the Württemberg pastors—also help to further the reading of the Bible. During the past two years we have been able to scatter 170,000 such " seeds."

" With God's help we will fulfil our task "—thus do we speak humbly and in faith, in face of the task which we have to carry out in the future. And we pray : " Give us Grace, O Lord, that we may use such ingenuity in face of Thee, that we may be like the servants who produce abundantly from the talents entrusted to them. Bless the service of our Society in the future, and may there be a new hearkening to thy Word everywhere through the Bibles which we send out year after year."

(*translated from German*)

TRADITION AND CRISIS

by Johannes Adler

Translation of an article which appeared in "Die Kirche," on the occasion of the 140*th anniversary of the Berlin Bible Society.*

THE new situation which the year 1945 created for Germany was felt not only in the realm of political life, but also in that of the Church. It is not that the content of the Church's message has altered ; that remains unchangeably the same within the changes of time. But, as a result of the immense outward and internal upheavals of recent times, the way of life of the people has changed and it has become necessary to consider anew the form of our service to the Christian community. All the churches' works have had to demonstrate what the basic *raison d'être* for their continued existence was and to ask themselves whether their activity would be able to pass the test of the Last Judgment as expressed : " What you have done to one of the least of our brethren, you have done it unto me."

Our Bible Society faces the same question. It could, of course, point to the rich tradition of over 130 years' work. Two influential men of the revival movement in Berlin sponsored its formation : the preacher Jaenicke, of the Bohemian Lutheran community, and the well-known " father of the poor," Baron von Kottwitz. But after the first missionary enthusiasm, publishing and selling remained the main activities. These were noteworthy as aiming to distribute the Bible at the cheapest possible price, but did not take into consideration the fact that apart from practising Christians, a whole area had formed of those who were reached only to a limited extent by the message of the Bible. Apart from the activity of some daughter Societies, no forward missionary movement developed which would respond to the requirements of the new situation. This 130-year old tradition came under the merciless judgment of the immediate post-war period. Should the Society continue in the old tracks ?

The great dearth of Scriptures after 1945 caused the answer to this question to be postponed. Since around the beginning of the war any printing of the Bible had been forbidden by the authorities of the Nazi State. The small supplies of Scriptures were either lost or, if they were saved from destruction were, like the Scriptures that were collected in the parishes from households that had spare copies, in no way sufficient to cover the needs. Only after the granting of a publishing licence was it possible for the Society to produce Bibles with the help of borrowed printing materials. The production of plates of our own gave the opportunity of following in the tradition of Bible printing which began in the days of the Reformation, and to produce editions which were different in form from the Society's earlier editions. The steady work of recent years has been concerned with carrying out this task, of which the results are before us. From the beginning of 1955 all standard editions of the Holy Scriptures, from the large 8vo Bible for the altar, the chancel and household, to the small Bible and vest-pocket Testament, and also those in leather bindings, are available. Also a Bible in Roman type, urgently asked for by pastors and catechumens, is in course of production.

We are again able to offer the Holy Scriptures in sufficient quantities, but is this offer accepted, and are the Bibles purchased also read? It is here that the "Scripture need" of our day lies—a need which must have priority in the concern of Bible Societies. Thus we should not in the future limit ourselves to the production and usual methods of distribution; a systematically built up work of a missionary nature must be started. Towards this end our publications programme for 1955 envisages the production of suitable small booklets of introduction to the Scriptures. Preaching and lecturing tours in the parishes are intended to awaken the joy of renewed familiarity with and confidence in the Book. Bible exhibitions on a small or large scale serve the same purpose. But unless there are people within the individual church communities who, as faithful Bible readers themselves, introduce their neighbours to Bible reading and help to open their eyes and ears to the message of the Holy Scriptures, such efforts remain limited in scope. The achievement of this, as part of the problem of the total mission of the Bible Societies in our country, remains our great aim. It is our responsibility—and our debt—to make God's Word available to the world and to our neighbour. All tradition is worthless if we do not recognise this task. Thus our anniversary cannot be the occasion for giving complaisant reports based on statistics of Bible distribution since 1814. We find a more appropriate keynote of the celebration in a joyful gratitude for the guidance and preservation of the work through God's mercy, together with the humble request that we shall be enabled to recognise where our future paths should lie. For tradition retains its value only if it experiences constant renewal through true repentance.

BIBLE SOCIETY IN "GADGET-LAND"

by Olivier Béguin

An ingenious people

Of the numerous features which make "the American," none is perhaps as striking as his spirit of ingenuity. The "new world" has always enjoyed the reputation of being the centre of the press-button civilisation and the spearhead of technical progress. Yet the visitor cannot, even when he is prepared beforehand, but be startled by the multifarious expressions of these characteristics

which he constantly meets there. They are highly developed, like Cinerama, the new tridimensional cinema system: three screens, three projectors and loudspeakers all around; or they are like the facing on the front of a 22-storey building opposite the Bible House in New York, with double sheets of aluminium (washable!)—all done in one day—to take the place of bricks and mortar. Or they are amusing, like the ever-present automatic distributors of "stimulating and refreshing" coca-cola, or orange and other juices, served in cardboard beakers, or like the three-minute washing, shampooing and drying of cars. Or just clever, like the turnstile operated by your dime in the New York underground, which has taken the place of the ticket collector, or like the automatic starters and regulators on electric cooking stoves, which start cooking the dinner even when the housewife is out. The greatest marvels, perhaps, along with the innumerable washing and cleaning machines for the household, are the huge foodstores where everyone picks up at leisure (paying when leaving the store) his weekly load of tins or packets, or portions of fresh meat or cheese of all sizes and kinds, which are kept in deep freezers and wrapped in cellophane; all kinds of milks: homogenised, pasteurised, sour; all kinds of vegetables and fruits: dried, frozen, or fresh; ready-made vitaminised baby foods, prepared with meat, vegetables or fruit juices or extracts. It is a perpetual search for whatever might make life easier and action more efficient. The country seems to be constantly stirring with new ideas, new inventions, new methods, new systems, new techniques, new machines, from the electronic brain to some simple adaptation of the lever principle. In all fields, indeed, the "gadget" is king. It can be given more ambitious or more dignified names. It remains the same, in essence as well as in aim.

This spirit of ingenuity does not show itself only in the realm of the laboratories; prompted by the high cost of hired labour, plus the pioneer spirit which still exists in many Americans, it has helped to maintain or to revive a tradition of home construction. Scores of people now have a real workshop at home with all kinds of tools, electrical equipment and accessories, for improving their house, working out some special kind of decoration or some useful household device. How unexpected it was for me to help (oh, very little indeed!) one of our American Bible Society colleagues to build a cleverly designed wooden fence at the side of his house, or to sit in the home of another on a chair and at a table that he himself had made, or to look at some of the 39 electrically-driven instruments and tools a third had in his house, from the electrical razor to the refrigerator and the sewing machine, and including the equipment of a jeweller's workshop! Where else, except in missionary areas, would we see in the suburb of a big city like New York, the members of a new Christian community—offspring of one of the local churches—build with their own hands from the foundations to the roof, their own church and pastor's manse, and all done in their "free" time? All expenses, of course, for the purchase of the ground and of the material are covered by the members themselves, partly by direct grants and partly by means of a 10-year loan.

An enthusiastic church

The visitor to the U.S.A. is struck by the important part church and religion play in the life of people and in the life of the nation. As is well known, State and Church are independent. But because the churches received no official support and did not become state institutions, they have kept or developed their pioneer spirit to a very high degree. One has the impression that religion is penetrating dynamically into many fields of life which remain almost untouched in areas where the State church system prevails. Paradoxically enough,

Christianity and life seem much more intermingled in the U.S.A. than in countries where Church and State are officially related.

If visitors at Evanston were touched and cheered by the welcome-to-the-delegates posters displayed in most of the shops of the little city, and admired the ingenuity of the show-window experts who managed to establish pleasant links between the " Theme " and the visitors and their wares, they were also a little surprised to find Scripture quotations displayed above the departments and sub-departments of a big shopping centre and to read, just above a beautifully moulded plastic leg wearing some fine quality nylon stockings : " How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace! "

It did not seem incongruous for most Americans to have the Lord's Prayer sung on the stage in the middle of a variety show, or a meal-time grace being prayed, in a film, as a psychological device for teaching better table manners to a handful of ill-educated young men.

Even the Bible stories find their way into the Sunday comics. Thus one Sunday I read the end of the life of Daniel. The hero, condemned to be thrown into the den of lions, fights with the energy of despair against his guard, fells him to the ground, and finally gallantly helps him to his feet at the moment when the guard himself was on the point of falling into the den. Then Darius, admiring Daniel's courage, strength and generosity, names him his chief attendant.

America to-day is clearly experiencing a true religious revival and many aspects of the churches' life are most exhilarating and paramount for Christians all over the world. There is a danger, however, that to be religious or Christian may be regarded as a matter of good form rather than of genuine experience. Christianity, the Bible, the churches, religion may become objects used by the individual for selfish or other purposes, or devices, " gadgets," used to make a cause or an argument more appealing. Yet the singling out of such cases as the above-mentioned ought not to be allowed to obscure the genuine interest shown by an increasing number of people in Christianity, the true Christian life and the spirit of real fellowship that can be found in innumerable churches, the generosity, the missionary concern that have led the American churches and Christians in recent years to send such large gifts and so many workers and missionaries to churches in all parts of the world. " Gadgets " apart, even Christianity in Victorian Britain was also perhaps too much a " fashionable " thing. Yet where would the Church in the mission fields be, had that era not taken place? How could the B.F.B.S. have served as it was able to serve?

This is the situation of the A.B.S. in the United States to-day. A nation becoming increasingly Christian-conscious gives more and more generous support to all aspects of the Church's life, including the work of the Bible Society. This is probably the great basic fact which underlies all the developments in the life and activity of that Society at the present time.

An alert Bible Society

Inasmuch as any Bible Society shares in the characteristics of its time, its environment and its nation, several features in the work of the A.B.S. seem to reflect parallel aspects in American life. In its youthful spirit, its drive, its missionary vision and consciousness, its generosity, the A.B.S. reflects on the national level those features of its national life which so strongly impress the visitor from abroad. In its continual search for new techniques in all phases of

Bible Society work, for new approaches, new possibilities of extension, it participates in that unceasing national quest for novelties, mechanical devices and greater efficiency. It too is " gadget-minded " in its own way and the spirit of ingenuity too is one of its characteristics.

Production of Scriptures

Of all the Scripture Portions distributed in a year by the Bible Societies of the world, almost half are circulated by the A.B.S. in the U.S.A. itself. This probably appears fantastic to anyone imbued with the traditional idea : one Gospel, then the New Testament, then the Bible. Most people already possess one Bible or several, somewhere in their home. (Let us not forget that commercial publishers circulate 2–3 million Bibles and Testaments each year.) But the widespread circulation of Gospels in the U.S.A. is primarily conceived and intended as a way of reviving in the hearts and minds of people a new desire to read the Scriptures. Large quantities of Portions are used, for instance, for systematic distribution connected with " Back to the Bible " campaigns launched locally or regionally by the churches. Experience has shown that in such areas, attendance at church and Bible study groups has increased and that such efforts have led to permanent results. Another important practice is the production of Gospel Portions with a specially designed cover for use at Christmas or Easter. Clergy use them as Christmas cards for some of their flock ; chaplains in hospitals present them to the patients. Quite a considerable number of Portions are also circulated among people travelling in the long-distance "Greyhound" buses. A few years ago the experiment was made of providing containers with Scripture Portions in bus stations. Here again churches and the Bible Society co-operated and to-day over 70 such containers have been installed, and about half a million Gospels are distributed in this way annually.

Allowing an exception to its rule that it should produce nothing less than complete books of the Scriptures, the Society authorised the publication of the " Sermon on the Mount " in large type. This booklet has been so well received that its publication has been continued and extended to several other languages, and the production of similar booklets with Christmas Story or the Story of our Lord's Passion is also now contemplated.

The venture of the illustrated magazine Gospels is, of course, well known. Many other Societies have taken similar steps. The characteristic of the American production, however, lies in its universality and its objectivity, which have made it more suitable than any other to be reproduced in other languages. Preparation of the last three instalments, which contain all the Epistles and the Book of Revelation, was well advanced last summer and special care was being taken to find the most useful type of cover for the volume, which will contain all the instalments which together comprise the whole New Testament. Illustrated nylon covers in colour are to be used; this will be washable—ideal for family Bible reading and for use in Sunday schools!

Distribution and Use

The aim of the Bible Society in making and encouraging such experiments is not to boost its circulation. But it sees in these efforts the best and most up-to-date way of fulfilling its basic missionary responsibility. The pioneer days of Bible Society work are over. Bibles and New Testaments are now published by various agencies in sufficient quantities to satisfy the demands of the public. Only the cheap editions are circulated by the Bible Society at non-

profit-making prices, or even free of charge (to the armed services in particular) in order to meet the needs of those who will not or cannot afford to pay the commercial price. But even if the Bible is available, it still has to be read ; it still has to be brought back to the minds of the people, and this steady and intensive distribution of single Gospels, encouraged by the Society but effectuated by the churches and various Christian organisations, is one way of discharging this permanent service for which all Bible Societies exist.

This relatively new concern in Bible Society history for the use of the Bible, has also found another expression in the annual " World-wide Bible Reading Campaign." Lists of daily passages for Bible reading from Thanksgiving Day to Christmas, are distributed through local churches and congregations, and through Army and Navy chaplains, to millions and millions of people. They are reproduced in many periodicals and weeklies, used in certain radio-chains, followed widely in the U.S.A. and by American citizens in many parts of the world, and reproduced in a few other countries where the A.B.S. is at work. The term " world-wide " might need some qualification and the choice of passages may not be very satisfying to all, but the warm and extensive response received in this venture is the best sign that the target has been hit and a need has been met.

In his address to the World Council of Churches' Assembly at Evanston, President Eisenhower, referring to the religious revival which characterises the life of the Church in the U.S.A. to-day, called the attention of his audience to what seemed to him one of the most healthy signs of this evolution, the large number of Scriptures circulated in the States, particularly by the A.B.S., though he did not mention the Society by name. (Indeed, the home circulation of the Society has more than doubled in five years.) At a time when religion is becoming fashionable, there is certainly no more important task for a Bible Society than to bring the Word of God before the citizens of its nation again, and more insistently than ever. For only that Word, in its simplicity, its directness, its sharpness, will be able to keep them from the deadly self-contentedness of pharisaism and maintain in them the sense and the vision of their true vocation in the world. And this is the task the A.B.S. is trying to face in its own country.

Promotion

But initiative and mobility cannot be limited to the field of production and distribution. These qualities are just as much needed in matters of promotion. No Society can hope to expand its activities and gain increased support if it relies on whatever its supporters are traditionally used to giving, if it does not try to keep warm the interest of its constituency and catch the imagination of prospective donors. This necessity is certainly felt more strongly in America where competition is fiercer than anywhere else. It is in this field that the spirit of ingenuity has to manifest itself at its best.

The A.B.S. has given up the system of auxiliaries : the country is too vast and too sparsely populated. Many denominations now include in their ordinary budget an allocation for the A.B.S.—usually a fraction of one per cent. This, however, is not sufficient to finance all the Society's work. Individual gifts are needed. New members have to be sought. Since there are no auxiliaries, other possibilities had to be explored : through the churches by attending their conventions and inviting them to be represented on the Advisory Council at which the budget is first presented ; through publicity in religious papers ;

through audio-visual aids ; through radio and television ; through the seals that friends of the Society buy and stick on their mail ; through Good Will Books—a sum of $400,000 has been collected in this way, over and above the ordinary budget, for Scripture distribution in Japan. The Bible Society has to keep itself before the public eye. Like many other religious organisations in the U.S.A., it has its department of annuities, arranging life pensions for people who are ready to give to the Society the benefit of their money, against that security, and the A.B.S. is reputed to be one of the most reliable of such securities, having never failed in meeting its obligations to a single annuitant for over a century.

But the latest " gadget " in this field is perhaps the use of lists of addresses. Such lists can be hired from all kinds of firms, religious or secular, or even from offices specialised in the establishment of such lists. A soap-making factory may have a mailing list of people to whom they send their publicity ; a bank has its list ; a publishing house has its own. All one has to do is to hire one of these lists and send some publicity, a letter, an appeal, a pamphlet to all the people named. But this is only the beginning. The important moment in the process is the checking of the answers. What percentage reacts? If, with an interval between, two different types of publicity material have been sent out, which has met with the greater response, among what category of people? Combinations are infinite. Now, after a number of years' experience, those in charge of the department already feel more confident. They know which group will respond to a " sentimental " letter, which reacts more readily to a " cool " presentation of data.

Of course, all the statistical work is done by a large filing machine. Twenty-five thousand cards are sorted in an hour and hundreds of thousands, even millions, in a few hours. The machine also checks all the gifts of the approximately 500,000 members of the Society. In a few moments, all those whose payments are due have been singled out, all those who have doubled their contribution are gathered together, and the sheep and goats are easily separated, if the expression can appropriately be used to designate those who have answered the last letter of the secretary and those who have not. The supreme marvel is that since the use of the machine saves people's time, every single gift can now be acknowledged (often, if it is important enough, by a personal letter), tabulated, registered, microphotographed and filed within 24 or 48 hours.

In a world where technical development is a dominant factor, as it is in the U.S.A., an organisation like the Bible Society has to keep up with the general evolution and to adjust itself to the new conditions (unless it is prepared to vegetate and slowly turn into a museum piece.) Indeed, in many ways it is itself carried by the general movement and many of the methods of work of the A.B.S. are a kind of natural and spontaneous adoption of techniques currently practised in the country. Any *living* organism is bound to assume some characteristics of the milieu in which it lives and works. The conditions in which the A.B.S. has to work have no exact parallel, as far as I can judge, anywhere else in the world. Yet insofar as other nations adopt an increasingly mechanical civilisation, similar methods and techniques corresponding to those which the A.B.S. has to employ will also demand growing consideration elsewhere.

Cinerama is also shown in London today ; automatic cooking starters, car gears or cooling systems have spread elsewhere too. In a changing world, initiative and mobility become the law of life for all.

* * *

I have not attempted in the above pages to give a full-length portrait of the work of the American Bible Society. Like some Picasso imitator, I have tried to jot down here an eye, there a nose and further on, in the corner, a shoulder or a hand or foot. It is left to the spectator (or reader) to reconstitute the complete form of the subject! I have intentionally omitted the right arm and the right hand, namely the work of the Society abroad. But there is still one other feature which should find its place on our canvas. Modern analytical painting is not satisfied with the external shape of people or things; hidden features also have to be depicted. This cheerful, dignified and dynamic lady, the A.B.S., would not be what she is, if it were not for the heart—the headquarters' staff. In any Bible Society if the heart ceases to beat, the body dies. But the heart of the A.B.S. is very much alive, and one understands better the dynamism of the whole after a few days spent in that bustling centre in Park Avenue.

The departmental secretaries of the A.B.S. work as a team. Although each has his own definite task and function, yet matters of importance are discussed in common and each knows enough of the business of the other to be able to keep the machinery working during the absence of a colleague. Unlike most other Societies, the A.B.S. has no General Secretary who, in the last analysis, makes decisions on all subjects, but heads of department are immediately responsible to the Board of Directors for their particular sphere of activity.

In following this group work system, the A.B.S. has adopted a structure more flexible than the hierarchial one. It hopes in this way to be better equipped, in order to meet the exacting demands of the work in the U.S.A. to-day. Initiative and mobility are fundamental requirements for a body called to work in a society dominated by the perpetual search for the latest novelty and the latest "super-gadget." But in Bible Society work, as in team games, initiative and mobility remain ineffective if practised by individualistic players. Only a closely-knit team can assert itself and dominate the game. Our friends of the A.B.S. are conscious of this and by means of regular meetings and periodical conferences lasting two or three days (the latest took place this year, two days after my departure from the U.S.A.), they are working towards that end.

Initiative and mobility, team-spirit and pioneer-spirit: with these qualities, the A.B.S. is well-equipped for the task which awaits her in her country and in the world.

BIBLE EXHIBITION AT GREEK TRADE FAIR

GEORGE KLADIS

AN Exhibition or Trade Fair was first held in Thessalonica in 1926. After an interruption in 1941, on account of the war, it was resumed in 1951 with growing interest every year. The 1954 Fair surpassed all the former years both from the standpoint of the number of foreign participants and of the interest it attracted. Twelve foreign countries were officially represented, Great Britain and Soviet Russia being among those which participated for the first time. The total number of foreign firms which had exhibits was 1,077, representing twenty countries. The number of Greek firms represented was 4,090. Visitors this year were estimated at one and a half million.

It was in this Exhibition, held from 5th-30th September last, that the Bible Society took part. It was the first time since the Bible Society started work in Greece that it had made an appearance before the general public in a way other than through its depot and its colporteurs. A booth of about 12 sq. metres, large enough for our requirements, was rented in one of the buildings. This meant that all the people who visited that building necessarily passed in front of our booth.

About 125,000 copies of a four-page leaflet on the Bible were distributed free to visitors. 25,000 were reprinted whilst the Exhibition was in progress. It was the vast numbers of people that could be reached by means of a leaflet that we mainly had in view in deciding to take part in the exhibition. The title of the leaflet was "The Unique Book." The reasons for its uniqueness were given briefly on the front page, followed by opinions from a few great men. The work and aim of the Bible Societies were then explained, and this was followed by a few instructions on how to read the Bible. These instructions are also included on the dust jacket of our new edition of the Greek Modern Bible which came out last May. The last page of the leaflet contained a short price list.

Scriptures, including illustrated Gospels in magazine format in several languages, were displayed and the main inscriptions which caught the visitor's eye were "The Unique Book," "God's Book" and "In 1100 languages and dialects." Two posters were also displayed: one with the heading "The Record of Translations" and the other "The Record of Circulation." The latter gave the total annual circulation of the Scriptures throughout the world and the corresponding daily figure. We did not expect a great many sales because the majority of people went to a Fair of this kind in order to see the exhibits, rather than to make purchases, seeing especially that most of the exhibits were not on sale. Yet, in spite of that, a good number of copies were sold, far above our anticipations. The total number was 2,702 copies, or 208 Bibles, 232 Testaments and 2,262 Portions. The great majority of them were, of course, in Modern Greek, with English coming next. Of the Portions the books that attracted most interest were the illustrated Acts, the Sermon on the Mount and the Psalms. About 220 copies of the story of Mary Jones were also sold.

In a short broadcast from the Salonica radio station, the work of the Bible Society was explained, reference being made also to the Jubilee Celebrations of this year. The radio station kindly offered this broadcast free of charge.

There can be no doubt that many people must have been impressed with this advertising of the Bible in a way so novel in this country. Results cannot be judged merely from the sales effected because, in addition, great numbers of people who already possess a Bible or a New Testament must have now turned to the Book with a greater interest. But not a few must have, for the first time, seen something which called their attention to the Bible in a quite unusual and not unattractive way. Many stopped to have a good look at what was exhibited, or were seen reading the leaflet as they walked away. We have had not a few instances of persons who, having read the leaflet in their homes, came the following day to get a Bible. A lady told us that a person in a party of about ten friends had bought a Bible and all the rest decided to get one too. An old man, living in a village not far from Berea, came for the first time to Salonica in order to see the Exhibition. He bought a New Testament, this being the first he ever possessed, and the story of Mary Jones. A man who had bought

a Bible had already, in two days, read as far as Leviticus. A young man who was reviling us for selling an "outdated" book, on visiting our booth again another day, asked if we had anything in the way of proverbs. On being shown the Book of Proverbs he read a few lines and said: "This is very nice; this is the kind of book I like."

The presentation of the Scriptures to the public through Exhibitions or Fairs can be so effective that we should avail ourselves of all such opportunities. Important though colportage has been in the past and still is, because of its effective way of circulating the Bible, yet it is very important that distribution should no longer be confined to colportage but that other channels should also be sought out. This is all the more necessary in countries where there is a prejudice against the Bible and therefore against the Bible Societies too. Whilst on this subject, we may mention that we have found from experience that it is indispensable that colporteurs should always have a leaflet on the Bible for distribution ,and not rely solely on the opportunity they may have to talk to the persons they approach. Another thing of great importance is that short instructions on reading the Bible should be contained in a dust jacket or in a special leaflet. It is very helpful to a person who gets a Bible for the first time to have some sort of instructions, particularly as to where he may find certain subjects. Attractive subjects will arouse his curiosity and provoke him to look them up.

The above would not throw sufficient light on the extent of Bible interest in this country if no reference were made to the growing interest in the Bible noticeable in recent years in the Orthodox Church. This interest is unprecedented—we refer, of course, to the modern history of the Church—and has surpassed the anticipations of even the most optimistic. The peculiar and gratifying feature in the great change noticeable in recent years, is that an interest in Bible circulation is spreading among the laity. If, as one may expect, this interest grows still further, the demand for Scriptures—particularly for complete Bibles—will be constantly on the increase. Another factor which is sure to result in a larger circulation of the Scriptures is the opening of night schools by the State throughout the country for the illiterate, at which attendance up to the age of twenty will be obligatory.

BOOK REVIEW

A BOOK IN HIS HAND—by A. M. Chirgwin*

The following comments come from contributors with experience of colportage work in widely differing areas. Mr. Robertson writes in the light of colportage as he has seen it in Japan and China; Pastor Caufriez writes on the basis of the situation in Belgium.

J. C. F. Robertson :—

Sooner or later this booklet had to be written. The sub-title tells us that it is a Manual of Colportage. It was necessary that a comprehensive account of just what a colporteur is should be compiled. Bible Society reports, deputation addresses, tell us that by colportage the Scriptures are distributed; occasionally a pen picture of an individual colporteur is given but the full picture of the colporteur, his calling, his training, the mechanics of his job, just how he accounts for his sales, how he lives when he is not making Bible Society headlines, these have never been adequately set out. This manual does just that.

*56 pp., published by United Bible Societies, price 1s. 6d.

Dr. Chirgwin makes a good case for giving the colporteur a recognised place in the Church. It is at this point, however, that doubts begin to arise in the mind of the reviewer. From all my experience with colporteurs the last thing one would want to do is to make them self-conscious. Most of the colporteurs I have known would be very surprised at the kind of discussion that takes place on his status in the councils of the Church. The best colporteurs I have known, and I have known hundreds intimately, have always ceased to be good colporteurs when they began to worry about their status. The good colporteur is a man who is just glad to be a colporteur, a bookseller ; by many strange experiences he has been brought to that point. Very often just because he is a good colporteur he takes pride in his position in the Bible Society ; he would say : " Do not rob me of that by making me self-conscious and asking others to give me a status outside the Bible Society."

Having said that, however, full agreement is given to the statement that colportage should be recognised as a definitely religious service. Another observation, however, immediately springs to mind. . . . Colportage is usually considered as a religious service by those in the best position to know : that there are people in society and the Church who do not recognise it as such is well known, but such are judged by their judgments. When men in positions of responsibility have had such a narrow experience of evangelism as to be ignorant of one of the most vital forms of evangelism, is it not better to allow such to be judged by their lack of experience ? Never in Church councils when colportage has been discussed and someone out of his ignorance has spoken disparagingly of it, have I seen such a person get away with it.

" Bible distribution is one of the secrets of Christian expansion and the recognition of this is what brought the Bible Societies into being. . . . From the first they regarded their work as part of the total effort to reach those outside the Church's life." This is as good a statement of colportage as I know and I would commend it to all who study this manual. Wherever a suggestion is put forward, a new method, a criticism, judge it by this standard—Christian expansion reaching out to those outside the Church's life.

All sorts of intriguing thoughts are inspired as one reads a sentence like " it is the Church's task, for in the last resort it is the Church that is responsible for seeing that the Scriptures are put into the hands of all men everywhere." Precisely ; but surely we should add that the Church has set aside those in her membership qualified to carry through that task ; these men have formed themselves into Bible Societies, but by doing so they are still an integral part of the Church and do their work in her name. Nothing can be more disastrous to our cause than that the idea should get abroad that the Bible Societies only exist till the Church wakens to her duty and does this work for herself. The Church is working through the colporteurs, through the secretaries and all the vast organisation that lies behind the effort to give this Book to all men everywhere. The example of India is quoted : this is likely to become an increasingly fertile area for discussion at future Bible Society conferences. The BULLETIN of the United Bible Societies carries on the inside front cover the names of the men who guide the activities of the U.B.S. ; every member Society of the U.B.S. has similarly distinguished names ; these are the men who see that this side of the Church's work is carried through. I wonder how many of them would be willing to subscribe to the view that by serving the Bible Societies " they weaken the Church's sense of responsibility " (see page 23).

One picks out bits like this to illustrate how stimulating the reading of the manual can be, and if we differ from observations and inferences here and there, these only show how glad we have been to have this to think over. All Bible Society men will be in Dr. Chirgwin's debt for this manual; would it be too much to hope that every committee and board of the member Societies of the U.B.S. will set aside time for the systematic study of the contents of the manual? The table of contents reads :—

Chapter 1 : The Colporteur's Task
Chapter 2 : His Personal Life and affairs
Chapter 3 : His Training and Relation to the Church
Chapter 4 : His Methods
Chapter 5 : His Future

Lastly, the appendix contains 30 hints to colporteurs. Most colporteurs will have found out most of these things for themselves, but in talking to colporteurs' conferences, secretaries and special speakers would do well to study these hints and incorporate at least their intent in their addresses.

Finally, to appraise the value of the many methods of doing colportage which Dr. Chirgwin brings together it is necessary to remember that at one time or other these methods have been tried; the question that arises then is which of the methods has proved good and which not so good. Let the serious student of the manual test these methods for himself. Every year the member Societies of the U.B.S. issue reports on their work. Statistics are given. Since it is the avowed purpose of the Societies to do all they can to increase the availability and sale of the Scriptures, then there is one measuring rod that can be applied. Do these methods bring greater sales? Does a theory of the relation of the Church to the Bible Society result in greater sales of Scriptures? A study of the statistics before and after that theory was applied in practice will give the answer. Does the use of gadgets and appliances in, say, Japan, help the colporteur in his work? A study of Scripture sales before and after the gadgets became available will be rewarding. These are simple tests and none will be quite as delighted as Dr. Chirgwin to see them applied and the lessons thus learnt taken to heart.

PAUL CAUFRIEZ, *writes* :—

IN French-speaking countries the very word "colporteur," meaning pedlar or travelling salesman, indicates a mediocre form of employment and consequently the Bible colporteur is, in many people's minds, on the same level as the traveller in floor polish or the man who sells boot-laces from door to door.

Dr. Chirgwin's handbook has the great merit for our French-speaking countries of restoring the word and work of the colporteur to a place of respect. If this book can be circulated in our Latin-countries, it will serve a useful purpose in shaking up the conception which many Protestants have, of Bible colportage being a commercial job and a kind of cinderella in Christian service. The Booklet "A Book in His Hand" deserves the greatest attention in view of all the thought that has gone into it. The author points out very appropriately the soundness and dignity of the ministry of colportage. The call which is sounded from Dr. Chirgwin's book is very timely. Indeed, it ought to have been sounded on a world scale much sooner. The timeliness of the call can be appreciated if two facts of prime importance are taken into account :

(1) Since the population of the world has tripled during the past 125 years, a commensurate increase in the efforts at Scripture distribution is required and it is quite true, in this context, that a continual increase in the number of col-

porteurs or in the means of Scripture distribution should be enlisted to complete the present efforts.

(2) The rhythm of political events, internal changes in some countries, and the possibility, which becomes more and more probable through the advance in technical knowledge, of a war which might descend at short notice on one country or area of the world, do not allow of long-term programmes of Scripture distribution.

We recollect meeting a young American before the war in Korea, who, before God, felt urged to go and witness in that country. It was only later that we understood that it was God who had placed on his heart this sense of urgency. Time is short.

Dr. Chirgwin's booklet shows the Church and its members that, in the realm of Bible distribution it has a responsibility before God. and that no colportage work in progress should be ignored by the churches. The ministry of the colporteur should be recognised by the churches like other forms of ministry. Indeed, it is quite plain, in the light of the conditions mentioned above, that a million voluntary colporteurs, working in close contact with the local churches —as suggested elsewhere by Dr. Chirgwin—would not be too many to face the needs of the present moment.

I particularly appreciate Dr. Chirgwin's emphasis on the spiritual nature of colportage within the total Christian task. If it is true that certain colporteurs, possessed of a special gift of salesmanship, are considered as the best colporteurs simply because their sales are high, it is also true that the task of the colporteur is of a spiritual nature. The commercial aspect of Bible distribution is incidental to the work, and not an essential part of it. Indeed, if people in general attached as much value to what is offered to them free of charge as they do to what they pay for, and if the Christian community were sufficiently generous to make it possible for all the Bibles needed in the world to be offered free of charge, then the selling of Scriptures would no longer be necessary.

In the past our Lord spoke in the towns and in the country, and in their turn His apostles spoke to men near and far. They spoke to the people face to face. Today they are no longer with us to speak to us directly, but we have their message in the Book, and in distributing the Gospels or the New Testament we take the message of Christ from place to place, so that it will remain there, and herein lies one of the essential tasks of the Church. We are grateful to Dr. Chirgwin for having re-thought this truth and brought it again to our attention.

I have had the joy of helping to train others in this vocation and of personally conducting campaigns in which dozens of members of the churches, young people and adults, participated. We have held colportage campaigns, in which we have experienced together the fact that such efforts are a real mission of the Church, sustained by the prayers of many supporters, and are not in any sense commercial enterprises. The success and blessing of God bestowed on these efforts and on the sacrifice involved (we often had to give a book instead of selling), have proved to us that Bible distribution is a work to which we are called by the Lord of the Church, and that He gives His encouragement by filling our hearts with joy. More than one young man or young girl who have taken part in these voluntary colportage campaigns, have expressed with

enthusiasm the happiness they had received in being upheld by God in all the effort and difficulties encountered in their work of house-to-house colportage.

May Dr. Chirgwin's book give to the Church " the vision of a Bible for everyone, everywhere."

BACK TO THE BIBLE—by H. G. G. Herklots

This little book of a hundred and fifty odd pages (not including a short chronological table, a bibliography and an index) is most timely and welcome at a time when the Coronation Bible, Bible weeks, Billy Graham's emphasis on the Bible and the B.F.B.S. Third Jubilee celebrations in Britain have drawn the attention of a large section of the public " back to the Bible." It is intended to be an informative book for the " average Christian reader " and in this it succeeds remarkably well.

Fifty years ago J. Paterson Smyth wrote for the same general public what proved to be one of the most popular books on " How We Got our Bible." Since that time tremendous discoveries of ancient manuscripts have been made and much light has been thrown upon the early history of the transmission of of the Scriptural text. Canon Herklots most fittingly includes the story of these developments in his new book, and thus offers to the public a very creditable companion to J. Paterson Smyth's classic.

The book is sub-titled " A Literary Pilgrimage " and indeed, without any technicalities, it is a simple matter to stroll back at an easy pace from the Coronation Bible to the most ancient available manuscripts at present available, those of the Cairo Geniza discovered at the end of the last century and those of the Dead Sea brought to light during the last few years. Thus, using the Coronation Bible, which is in the Authorised Version, as a point of departure, the author leads us " behind the printed New Testament " and " behind the printed Old Testament," through the history of Greek and Hebrew scholarship up to the Renaissance. He also takes us " back to the missionaries," to those early translators in Europe of the Middle Ages and to the ancient Near East, where the Scriptures were the best tool of missionary activity.

The author then gently introduces the reader to the world of " the earliest Greek manuscripts," suggesting by means of some selected examples the kind of difficulties that research work on the text of the Bible can encounter. He tells at some length the story of the discoveries in Cairo Geniza and in the Dead Sea and concludes with a chapter in which he shows, by means of two or three concrete examples, how scholars and translators or revisers are " using what has been found," to the advantage of every Christian Bible reader and Bible student.

The outstanding quality of the book is its fluidity. Although the author has followed a carefully prepared plan and has undertaken a great amount of research in preparing it, there is no rigidity in the account which is offered to the reader as a story rather than in the form of a systematic treatment. The writer does not touch questions of authorship nor of the chronology of the appearances of the books of the Bible themselves.

O. B.

(Ernest Benn, Ltd., London, price 12s. 6d.)

NEWS FROM ALL THE WORLD

Argentina

THE report for 1954 indicates that a new record in the circulation of the Scriptures has been reached. The agency sold and distributed in round figures 63,000 Bibles (50% more than in 1953), 64,000 Testaments and 960,000 Portions, through the channel of over 600 correspondents and voluntary colporteurs.

The new eight-storey Bible House which is being erected on a central site in Buenos Aires will be inaugurated, it is hoped, towards the end of March 1955.

■

The commemoration of the Third Jubilee of the Bible Society movement was celebrated in Buenos Aires on November 15th at a gathering organised by the Advisory Council. Almost a hundred persons, representing 28 denominations, attended that celebration, which took the form of a fellowship tea. A number of messages and greetings were read, in full or in part, by the leaders of the denominations represented. The chairman of the Advisory Council, the Rev. Santiago Canclini, addressed the gathering on the value and indispensability of the Bible Societies' contribution to the evangelical movement in Argentina and to the country as a whole. " We, the representatives of the Younger Churches, are in greater debt to the Bible Societies than anyone else for, together with the spoken message, we have received also as a gift from Heaven that which was to us unknown : the written Word, by means of which we have found God through Jesus Christ. It is our turn now to feel deeply the responsibility by adequately supporting this great work so as to respond, if only in part, to our Lord's command : ' Freely ye have received, freely give.' " The Rev. Dr. Ch. Turner, secretary of the joint A.B.S.-B.F.B.S. agency in Rio de la Plata, answered on behalf of the parent Societies.

Belgium

The new General Secretary of the *Belgian Bible Society*, the Rev. Paul Caufriez, took office on October 1st. His predecessor, the Rev. J. Harts, is now working for the Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches. His valuable knowledge and experience will still be available to the Belgian Bible Society, for Pastor Harts has accepted the invitation to become a member of the Committee. Pastor Caufriez is the grandson of a former B.F.B.S. colporteur in Belgium. Readers of the BULLETIN will remember an article by him (No 16, p. 25) on the Bible campaign he launched with a group of young people from his church in the southern part of Belgium, which resulted in the formation of a new evangelical church and of the nucleus of churches in two other communities. Pastor Caufriez had been closely connected with the Belgian Bible Society as a member of the Committee for over two years.

*

Six new colporteurs were appointed last October by the Committee of the Belgian Bible Society, following a probationary period of three months. Pastor Caufriez writes in this connection :

" During recent years, the Belgian Bible Society has found its manpower reduced by the death or retirement of several of its colporteurs. It has been able this year, however, to find and appoint a whole band of colporteurs, who complete and reinforce the normal number. From now on our regular personnel will consist of 10 colporteurs plus an agent who visits the bookshops. Some of the colporteurs, who will be located in more sparsely-populated areas, will be provided with cars. A special effort is to be made next year in the Ardennes, an area so far hardly touched by colportage.

" All these old and new colporteurs came together for a day of retreat early in November, at the head-

quarters of the Society in Brussels. The members of the Committee and the office personnel also participated, which gave us the opportunity of getting to know one another, of praying together, of studying and meditating upon the Word of God, and of examining together the difficulties and plans in connection with colportage work in our country.

"The clericalism found in certain areas, very often tainted also with an instinctive distrust of the 'colporteur,' and the religion of good works or self-satisfaction which is practised by so many people, were found to be the two major obstacles to the penetration of the Bible in our land. But there was also apparent, during our discussions, the unsatisfied need of a population which is passionately searching for a truth which can liberate. Whenever distrust with regard to the colporteur is overcome, an astonishing spiritual need is revealed.

"The task of Bible distribution is so vast that a well-planned strategy is absolutely indispensable. Only a methodical organisation of colportage will permit us to reach all the homes of our country."

Chile

In the correspondence columns of the *Christian Century* the following information is given, emanating from Santiago :—

That the evangelical radio broadcasting stations in Latin America are becoming a highly efficient medium for spreading the Gospel is indicated by the hearty response they evoke from listeners. One sign of this is the number of requests for the Bible study courses offered on the programmes. There is no evangelical station in this country, but one programme broadcast from outside has had 55,000 requests for such courses from Chilean listeners. A new station was recently established in Panama. The Pan-American Cultural Chain, with headquarters in Costa Rica, is making tape recordings, plastic records and programme scripts available to the evangelical stations.

Czechoslovakia

The following information is taken from the news bulletin of the Protestant Churches in Czechoslovakia :—

The Central Council of the Czechoslovak Church has published in the Blahoslav edition the second volume of the "Shorter Bible" by the Bishop-Patriarch Dr. František Kovář. The first volume, containing selections from the Books of Moses and from the historical books of the Old Testament, came out in 1953. The present volume contains selections from the books of Old Testament prophets. The third volume will be from the New Testament. The texts from the Bible are selected from the six-volume Kralice Bible, and the individual volumes of the "Shorter Bible" are so arranged that in the first part there are excerpts from the Books of the Bible with headings, and in the second part are detailed and carefully worked out notes which acquaint the reader in understandable fashion with biblical literary history, with biblical exegesis, the history of Israel, according to the pertinent sections and selections.

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Among recently published books is a new edition of the Kralice Bible, first printed in 1579-1593 in six volumes. It was prepared for publication by Dr. P. J. Chráska and Dr. M. Kaňák and came out in the Blahoslav edition (Czechoslovak Church Publishers), in a total edition of 20,000 copies. For the greater part it is a reprint of the text of the six-volume version (without notes, of course) according to the original edition of 1579-1593, including, that is, the fifth volume or the Apocrypha. This is the first publication of a Czech Bible with the Apocrypha in the 20th century; the last to be published with the Apocrypha was in 1863, but this was based on the Kralice text of 1613, not the earlier six-volume edition.

The present edition of the six-volume Kralice Bible follows the editorial tradition of the Unity of Brethren which published this Bible without the Apocrypha in 1940, 1945 and 1952, in Kutná Hora.

The Kralice Bible gave the Scriptures to the Czech people in an admirably faithful version, with a beautiful style. The Czech language of the Kralice Bible formed not only the Czech religious language—becoming the basis also for the Catholic translations of the Scripture—but also the mother of modern Czech as a whole.

Czech and Slovak Protestants welcome this new edition of the Kralice Bible furthermore because the majority of the Bibles published have the edition of 1613 as their basis, for example, all editions published by the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Czechoslovak Bible Society, and the 1613 text is the official liturgical text of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren. The new printing of the six-volume edition will make it possible for Bible readers who do not have access to the original of 1579-1593—which is indeed a rare item—to follow some of the most important differences in both texts, in addition to making possible a study of the Apocrypha, as mentioned above.

Egypt

Big changes have taken place since the Agency headquarters were centred entirely in Cairo this year, instead of being divided, as previously, between Cairo and Port Said. The sales depot in Sharia El Goumhouria (formerly Ibrahim Pasha) has been completely transformed. All office facilities have been removed to new premises and the space cleared has been shelved to take the larger stocks removed from Port Said. The remaining space has been re-designed to provide a separate store for Arabic Scriptures, a packing room and a smaller but more attractive sales department. The stock itself has been entirely revised and rearranged, and additional staff appointed to deal with the increased work.

All administration has been removed to new offices at 33 Sharia Oraby, Cairo, where the accounting and production divisions are also situated.

■

Port Said still retains its importance as a sales centre for the Canal Zone, and for Harbour colportage. With the improved situation following the signing of the Evacuation Agreement, it has proved possible to station a colporteur once more in Port Said, to work the area between that town and Suez.

Accommodation previously used for the Society's offices and stores in Port Said has now been rented to private tenants.

Work in the harbour has been handicapped severely due to the loss of the Society's launch "Mary Jones" in the harbour, after collision last January. Generous compensation has made it possible to build a fine new launch, however, of improved design and equipment, which is ready to take the water. Opportunities are still good for this work, by which Scriptures are carried over all the world through sales to vessels passing through the Canal, and the great variety of languages demanded is quite amazing.

■

The holding of the Staff Conference in Alexandria (erroneously stated in the last BULLETIN as having been held in Cairo) last April, stimulated considerable interest in the Society's work, with the result that an Auxiliary of the Bible Society was formed in October 1954. Its first President is Professor Nazim Fakhoury, of Alexandria University, and a Committee representative of the Christian Communities of Alexandria has been formed. One of the immediate results has been the wider observance of Bible Sunday and plans are under way for the holding of an exhibition, similar to that held in Beirut, of the Society's work. Amongst the resolutions

adopted at the Inaugural Meeting was the following :—" These resolutions are passed in humble recognition of the historic place of Alexandria in Christian history, and especially in biblical scholarship, and also in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Bible Society work."

*

Such has been the demand for Arabic Scriptures that estimates for production have had to be increased and advanced; 10,000 Arabic Pocket Testaments, printed in 1953, were exhausted within six weeks and a further 10,000 within a few months. Paper has now been received for an edition of 50,000 copies, of which several thousand are already ordered. A new edition of the cheap edition of the Arabic Bible is also needed much sooner than was expected and the demand for Portions remains heavy.

England

A revised edition of " The Gospel in Many Tongues " has been published by the *British and Foreign Bible Society*. It contains specimens of 825 languages in which the Society has published or circulated some portion of the Scriptures. Generally, John 3 : 16 has been reproduced, except in the case of languages or dialects in which that Gospel has not yet been published. Over 80 different alphabets or scripts appear in the booklet. In 167 of the 825 languages the whole Bible has been published ; in 214 the whole New Testament ; in 444 single Portions.

*

The General Committee of the B.F.B.S. has authorised the preparation and publication of a Greek-English diglot for the use of translators. The Greek text is the 1904 Nestle text : the English text will be a simple, faithful translation prepared by missionary scholars representing the main fields (India, Africa, South-East Asia, Oceania) and checked by a group of British New Testament experts for its fidelity to the originals.

This diglot is particularly intended for the growing number of nationals in all parts of the world who are engaged either alone or in committees in Bible revision or translation. Many of them have studied some Greek and have a good knowledge of current English. The publication of such a book should greatly help them as they carry out their work, in securing the most faithful rendering of the original in their own language. A number of experienced missionaries and translators have been consulted and approve of this idea.

The first book to be prepared will be the Gospel of St. Mark.

*

During the year, the magazine Gospels reached a total distribution of over half a million copies, and the Gospel of St. Mark is in active preparation.

*

For the first time last year the B.F.B.S. issued the Gospel of St. Luke with a special Christmas cover to be used as a greetings card. The whole tentative edition of 10,000 copies was sold in just over a week! The success of this experiment has led to the consideration of issuing similar editions in larger quantities for Christmas 1955.

*

The B.F.B.S. sent 25,000 Kikuyu Gospels last December for distribution in Mau Mau detention camps. A further 10,000 have been put in the press and will be sent as soon as they are ready. In addition, a printing of 5,000 Kikuyu New Testaments has been rushed through for despatch to Kenya.

*

The " Ruby " Bible of the B.F.B.S., which has been used particularly in schools and Sunday schools, celebrates its 25th birthday this year. Since 1930, fifty-eight impressions of this Bible have been made and a fifty-ninth is in the press. The Society has sold about 6,000,000 copies of this famous Bible.

*

The B.F.B.S. held its third Laymen's Conference at the beginning of last November at Eastbourne. It was attended by about sixty visitors, over half of whom had not previously taken part in the similar meetings. The subject, the "Truth of the Gospel," was examined by experts in the field of biblical scholarship. One session was devoted to an examination of the Old Testament under the guidance of the Rev. Dr. N. H. Snaith; another morning to a like process with the New, with the Rev. Dr. G. D. Kilpatrick, Dean Ireland Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Textual Criticism in Oxford University, exploring the development or the New Testament text, in particular of the Gospels; and later on to a discussion conducted by these two lecturers on the results of their researches, with questions from the "floor" of the Conference.

The Rev. Dr. N. J. Cockburn, General Secretary of the B.F.B.S., completed these lectures by one on the way in which the Bible as a whole has been handed down to the present day.

Other speakers reported on the work of the Society, on the Bible Weeks in Britain, and the Rev. Dr. W. J. Platt gave the concluding address.

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As a tribute of gratitude for the services rendered by the B.F.B.S. to the cause of Bible distribution in Germany, the Union of the German Bible Societies prepared a collection of statements on and testimonies to the Bible and the importance of Bible Society work. These messages were written by German people from all walks of life, from the President of the Western German Republic and the Deputy Prime Minister of the German People's Republic (D.D.R.) to a number of business men and artisans. The box containing these handwritten messages (altogether about 200) was handed over by the U.B.S. General Secretary, on behalf of the German Societies, to the B.F.B.S. at the last General Committee meeting in 1954, the very day of the Thanksgiving Service which concluded the Third Jubilee year celebrations.

Finland

The *Finnish Bible Society* reports that the production of the whole Bible in Finnish for the blind (Braille) will be completed this year. The work was begun two years ago and, when completed, will comprise thirty volumes.

The Government of Finland has made a substantial contribution towards the production of this Braille Bible.

France

In view of the encouraging response to the travelling Bible exhibition held in various towns during previous years, the *French Bible Committee* decided to organise another series in the autumn of 1954. The main cities of the south-west were visited with great success. In Bordeaux, the exhibition was opened by the mayor, who was at that time Minister of Public Works. The tour ended in Paris, where the exhibition was shown for three weeks at the end of November and in December. A special budget of £500 was allocated by the local churches to cover expenses; the main libraries of the capital, including the *Bibliothèque nationale*, lent some of their most precious volumes.

The oldest item in the exhibit was the cuneiform Tell El Amarna tablet dating from about 1400 B.C. It was one of a series of letters exchanged between Pharaoh Amenophis IV, author of "Hymn to the Sun" (traces of which are found in the 104th Psalm) and a minor Egyptian prince. Also included were several 14th century manuscript rolls used in synagogues, an Ethiopian manuscript of the 15th century, the first Bible printed in Paris (1476), and the first edition of the New Testament printed at Lyons in 1477. The modern section featured a 16-volume Braille Bible and translations into

several important languages of the world.

Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish leaders participated in the opening ceremonies, at which the Prefect of the Department of the Seine presided. Participating were Auxiliary Bishop Georges Chevrot of Paris; Pastor Marc Boegner, President of the French Protestant Federation; Dr. Jacob Kaplan, Grand Rabbi of Paris.

*

The French Bible Committee has recently published the Gospel of John in the form of an illustrated magazine. It is entitled "Des Ténèbres à la Lumière" (From Darkness to Light). The size of the edition was 60,000 copies. Together with similar editions of the Gospel of Mark and of the Acts of the Apostles, the French Committee can now put effective instruments of evangelisation into the hands of those who wish to devote themselves to this work.

*

Colportage is receiving a new impetus in France. The French Agency of the B.F.B.S. now employs four full-time and two part-time colporteurs. In addition, about ten voluntary colporteurs receive a special discount on the books they order. The Société évangélique de Genève, which has been employing Bible colporteurs in France since its foundation, is responsible for about twelve workers, of which two are full-time. Furthermore, the Société centrale d'Evangélisation, the evangelistic agency of the French Reformed Church, also counts among its various spheres of work a colportage department, with five colporteurs who sell religious literature along with the Scriptures.

At the end of September, eleven colporteurs from these three organisations met for a three-day conference in La Valbonne (Southern France). The Rev. H. C. Henriod, secretary of the Société évangélique de Genève, was in the chair; the Rev. A. de Perrot, of the same Society, led the Bible studies; Mr. J. Blumenthal, B.F.B.S. Agent and General Secretary of the French Bible Committee introduced the lively discussions which took place on the ministry of colporteurs, the subject which formed the central theme of the meeting. A closing communion service was organised at the request of the colporteurs themselves, among whom at least five denominations were represented.

Three "wishes" were adopted by the meeting. The first concerned the desire to see the Institut Martin Bucer in Strasbourg study the possibility of arranging a course for the training of colporteur candidates. (In the meantime, the board of the Institute has given a negative answer.) The second asked the French Bible Committee to see if 15-day camps could be organised for the training of voluntary colporteurs. The third motion concerned the study of a status giving the colporteurs from different Bible Societies the same basis of recognition. This status is to be the minimum common requirement, to which each Society would add its own particular rules.

Formosa

Large quantities of Scriptures for the blind are being used by a missionary training centre for the blind, which helps a number of blind soldiers to find a new living. The A.B.S. and the B.F.B.S. are supplying the books. The texts are read in class and commented upon by the teacher. Some of the students are specially trained so that they can in turn, under supervision, teach others. The interest is so great that the books have to be replaced at a rapid pace, some of them getting so worn that people can no longer feel the dots. "When a man once gets hold of a portion," writes the missionary in charge, "I can scarcely get it away from him for another to read. He feels that he can read that particular book, so he pleads

to keep it and yet he begs for another still."

Germany

Early in 1954 the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society approved a two-year programme of intensive Scripture distribution among refugees in western Germany. The scheme provides for the distribution of large quantities of Bibles, Testaments and Gospels and the appointment of Bible missionaries to help the organisations already engaged in service among refugees to make an evangelistic opportunity of this distribution effort.

The planning of the campaign was worked out during the summer and various discussions took place between British and representatives of the American Societies and competent people from Germany. Later on a committee was set up, composed of representatives of the German Bible Societies and of Church and other organisations at work among refugees, to supervise and co-ordinate the efforts and maintain adequate links with the supporting Societies.

This committee had its first meeting early in October. The Rev. R. Steiner, chairman of the *Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany*, was appointed chairman. Guiding principles for the activity of the committee were discussed and adopted. These guiding principles make it clear that the committee does not intend to limit its activity solely to the two-year programme of distribution among refugees, but considers its responsibility extends "to the improvement of Scripture distribution in Germany." The name under which the committee will be known is "Committee for Bible Mission." Other evangelistic organisations than those connected with refugee work may also be invited to be represented on the committee. "The committee," says another paragraph of the guiding principles, "sees its further aim as being to make its service a task to be discharged by all evangelical communities." Financial co-operation is also expected on the part of the organisations belonging to the committee.

■

Illustrated magazine Gospels meet with a most encouraging response in West Germany. The four Gospels and Acts have now been issued and 900,000 copies were produced in 1954. The same illustrations have been used as for the English, French, Dutch, Malayan, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean and Japanese editions.

A gift of 50,000 copies has been sent to the Austrian Bible Committee.

■

The two East German Bible Societies (the Berlin Bible Society and the Bible Society of Saxony—Sächsische Hauptbibelgesellschaft) celebrated their 140th anniversary last November in Leipzig. Both celebrations were attended by large congregations composed of friends of the Societies. In several addresses and speeches the importance of the missionary task of the Bible Societies was stressed, and expressions of gratitude given for the help received from sister Societies in Germany and elsewhere in the world.

■

Following a decision of the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany, posters and a 28-page booklet, both entitled "The Bible for the Whole World," have been sent to all evangelical pastors in West Germany. The aim is to help the pastors to give a new content to the celebration of Bible Sunday, particularly by drawing their attention to the needs of the world for Scriptures. The booklet contains articles about the Luther translation and its revisions, and about the use of the Bible in evangelistic work in the home church.

Greece

A new translation of the Old Testament in modern Greek is being published in instalments by a commercial publishing house in Greece. Thirty-two instalments have been published out of an estimated total of one hun-

dred. The new translation, which is issued in parallel columns with the text of the Septuagint, is the work of a committee composed mostly of professors of the theological faculty of the University of Salonica, working under the supervision of the University professor of Hebrew. A certain number of illustrations by Doré have also been used in this edition. The circulation of this work remains limited and the edition reaches only a small group of interested readers.

India

The *Bible Society of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* has printed 10,000 copies in English of "The Bible—Its Use and Distribution," which are being widely distributed in the three countries covered by the Society.

■

An attractive leaflet in the form of a "Letter to Newly-weds" is available for insertion in the Bible and may be purchased for presentation as a wedding gift. The leaflet also contains a list of Scriptures for special occasions. The B.S.I.P.C. is encouraging the idea of making the Bible the best wedding gift and has a stock of special luxury editions available for this purpose, in the major languages of the three countries.

■

Special large-type Gospels for new literates are available in twelve languages of the B.S.I.P.C. But as a further step forward, action is being taken to have the Gospels translated into the language of the people in rural areas. The manuscript of St. Mark's Gospel in Oriya is now ready.

■

The B.S.I.P.C. is proposing to produce illustrated magazine Gospels in the major languages of the three countries for which it is responsible.

■

The Sermon on the Mount is available in nine languages of the B.S.I.P.C. and will soon be available in five more, viz., Assamese, Kanarese, Oriya, Santali and Gurmukhi.

■

In the B.S.I.P.C. scheme for distributing Scriptures to matriculates and graduates (see BULLETIN No. 19, page 28), it was originally planned to confine the distribution of Scriptures to students of Christian Colleges only, but the scheme has since been extended to cover all matriculates and graduates of all the universities of the three countries, totalling about 300,000, and this number will increase year by year.

■

A number of open Bible cases have been prominently displayed in strategic places in many parts of India, to afford passers-by an opportunity of reading the Word of God.

■

The Methodist Church in Southern Asia will be celebrating its centenary in 1956. Special editions of the Bible in various languages with monograms and inscriptions are being prepared, and plans are under way for a wide distribution of the Scriptures to commemorate the centenary. The programme includes plans to place a Bible in every home of the Methodist Church.

Indo-China

Prof. Dr. A. Lehmann published some news about the Church in Indo-China in an issue of *Evangelische Welt*, the German religious press service, last summer. We quote the following extracts :—

Recently a mass movement of Christians has grown up among the tribes of Meo and Phoo Theng. It began in 1950. At that time a student had been able to help a witch doctor to become a Christian. Then a "chain" reaction of conversions set in. While from 1902 to 1952 only 452 baptisms had taken place, through this movement the baptism of 4,000 people was undertaken in a period of two to three years. Unfortunately, there is still no Bible or Portion yet in existence in their own language for the new converts. But many members of the tribe learn Lao, so that they can read the Bible in that language.

In Vietnam also there is no lack of Christian adherents. One comes across Roman Catholic Christians in particular, of whom many thousands have been killed. Often they have to deny their faith by trampling on a crucifix. In 1891 even members of the royal family who were Christians were exiled and dispossessed. In 1930 evangelical Christians had to stand the test of persecution. Today there are twenty-seven colporteurs at work in Vietnam and 1,200 Portions and around 200 Bibles are sold each month. The Word of God is circulating—and bringing comfort.

*

The B.F.B.S. agency in Indo-China reports the closing down, owing to the difficulty of conducting Bible Society work under present conditions, of its depot in Hanoi and the withdrawal of the depot keeper to the south of the country.

Japan

By October 1954—six months after publication—over 100,000 copies of the colloquial New Testament in Japanese had been circulated.

*

The *Japan Bible Society* suffered the loss of one of its Directors, who died in the Hakodate Ferry disaster caused by a typhoon at the end of last September.

*

The manuscript of the colloquial Japanese Old Teastament revision was completed last autumn, and the Japan Bible Society has chosen April 15th, 1955, as the date on which the completion of the Kogotai Bible and the Third Jubilee will be celebrated. Representatives from America, England, Australia, India, Korea, Indonesia and the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES have been invited to attend.

Netherlands

The following news of the Jubilee celebrations of the *Netherlands Bible Society*, has been received, in addition to that published in BULLETIN 20.

Her Majesty Queen Juliana and H.R.H. Princess Wilhelmina, mother of Queen Juliana, both sent gifts for the work of the Netherlands Bible Society on the occasion of the Jubilee.

Widespread publicity by press and radio was given to the Jubilee of the B.F.B.S., to the work of the N.B.S., as well as to the special Bible Day organised for the occasion. One form of publicity was characteristically Dutch; it is customary in the bulb-growing areas of Holland, when the flowers are in bloom, to make mosaics of flower petals, the best being honoured with prizes. The Christian Reformed Church of Lisse ingeniously used the poster of the Bible Day as the subject for their mosaic. It received third prize and, being situated in a conspicuous place, it drew the attention of thousands of people.

His Royal Highness Prince Bernhard was the first to sign the Goodwill Book in Holland, thus giving a further token of royal appreciation of Bible Society work. His example has since been followed by very many Dutch Bible readers.

The Jubilee celebrations continued in Holland during the Autumn. There were two main events: one took place in Groningen where the play "One World—One Bible," produced on 16th June in the Hague (see BULLETIN 20, pp. 22–24) was repeated with slight modifications; the other was in Leeuwarden (Friesland), where the celebrations were connected with the 1600th anniversary of St. Augustine's birth.

*

The "Committee for the Good Use of the Bible," which works in close collaboration with the N.B.S., is preparing the publication of translations in basic Dutch. The draft translations of the Epistle to the Ephesians will be submitted to a number of consultants of all denominations. The translation of Romans is proceeding. These publications are intended to facilitate acquaintance with the Bible on the part of people who live on the fringe of Christianity.

This same Committee has published for the first time an edition of 60,000 copies of a list of 382 Bible readings intended mainly for new readers. The list, prepared by an inter-church committee, should help them to find their way through the Bible. The first section is called "Encounter with Jesus Christ" (Who is He: selected passages from John; birth and youth; Luke; His activity amongst men; Mark; His teaching of the Kingdom: Matthew.) Second section: "The world into which He came"; third: "The people from whom He descended" (Abraham, the patriarchs, Moses, the Judges, Kings and Prophets); fourth: "The work He accomplished" (miracles, parables, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost); fifth: "The community He gathered" (Acts of the Apostles and extracts from Paul's Epistles); sixth: "Faith in Him."

Passages have been selected in such a way that almost always several extracts of the same book (although not necessarily consecutive passages) are suggested to the reader. Except in one or two cases, the length of the reading is one chapter or less.

*

The Reformed Church (the largest evangelical denomination in the Netherlands) set up some time ago an organisation called "The Great Trek," whose task it is to encourage and help the churches to give greater attention and emphasis to the use of the Bible. For two months last autumn the theme in all sections of parish life in almost all the churches was that of the use of the Bible in preaching the Gospel, in the life of the congregation, in the family, in personal life. The campaign was given a very practical turn, aiming at helping people to find their way through the Bible (the list of passages mentioned above was largely used), how to arrange family Bible reading. The Synod of the Church also authorised, for the use of the pastor, the publication of outlines of sermons on the importance of Bible reading.

*

The N.B.S. Bible van continues its travels through Holland. Formerly a Red Cross ambulance car, it was converted with little trouble or expense for its present functions. During November a number of places in the eastern part of the province of Groningen were visited. Judging by the sales figures, the offering of the Bible by this "travelling shop" meets a great need, especially in *smaller* places where the bookseller has no Bible Society editions for sale, or where there is no bookseller at all. In four villages of average size the sales amounted to florins 400, 600, 850 and 900.

From May to November, 1954, the total turnover was about florins 20,000.

*

Alongside the normal editions in five different sizes of the Dutch new translation, the N.B.S. also publishes one for people with bad eyesight, and one for the blind. The first is an edition in quarto size with very large type. The New Testament was completed in 1953 in seven volumes. The Old Testament will appear in fifteen volumes of which eleven have been published and the remaining four are either on the press or will be so in the near future. In Braille, eight New Testament volumes have been published (only the Gospel of Mark is still lacking); of the Old Testament, five volumes have appeared up till now.

Another special edition of the new version is the English-Dutch New Testament diglot. This diglot is meant for the use of schools and emigrants to English-speaking parts of the world. In parallel columns are printed the new version and the American Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, the latter by courtesy of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of

the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and the American Bible Society.

*

Partly in co-operation with the Joint Indonesian Publications Fund, various editions for Indonesia have been published during the last two years by the N.B.S. 1953 saw the publication of the Karo Batak (abridged) Old Testament and the Simalungan Batak New Testament, already mentioned in BULLETIN 13. In the same year, an edition of the Gospel of Matthew in Indonesian for new literates came from the press. This was illustrated with a new set of pictures by Karel Hoekendijk. In 1954 a similar edition of the Gospel of Luke in Javanese was published, also illustrated by Karel Hoekendijk. The year 1954 also saw the publication of the following new translations or revisions: the Bare'e New Testament (mid-Celebes), revised by Pastor Perdok and Pastor Magido; the book of Genesis in Sangirese (north-east of Celebes), translated by Pastor Scherrer and Pastor Madonsa (this also illustrated by Karel Hoekendijk); the book of Acts in Wewewa (Island of Sumba) by Dr. Onvlee; a revised edition of the famous 104 Bible stories in Karo Batak, also illustrated by Karel Hoekendijk.

The N.B.S. has decided to prepare a revised edition of the New Testament in Papiamen—spoken on Curacao and some other islands in the Caribbean. A committee is being set up on the islands for this revision and eventually for further translation work in this language. It has also been decided to undertake a revision of the Negro-English New Testament (Surinam) and a translation of the Old Testament in this language. For this purpose a translation committee is now being set up in Surinam.

*

In December, 1954, the N.B.S. launched a Youth Membership campaign. An illustrated folder entitled "Many hands make light work" was distributed in large numbers.

The purpose of this new development is to increase the interest of young people in the work of the N.B.S. Those who enlist as members or friends for the minimum amount of florins 2.50 per annum, are entitled to Youth Membership. The contributions thus secured will be set aside for a special branch of the work.

Furthermore, the Youth Members receive a badge and several youth folders in the course of the year.

Norway

The Norwegian Railway Mission is celebrating its one hundredth jubilee together with that of the Norwegian Railways. The Railway Mission undertakes to place Bibles in all centres where railway personnel have to spend the night. On the occasion of the jubilee 50 new Bibles were placed.

The Saar

At the end of January each year, the Home Mission of the evangelical churches in the Saar organises a series of ecumenical gatherings, to which representatives of neighbouring countries are invited. This year, Bible Society work forms the theme of the meetings and Bible Society leaders from Germany, France, Belgium and Holland have been invited, as well as the U.B.S. General Secretary, and have been asked to speak at various meetings. A Bible exhibition is also held during that period.

Sierra Leone

The September *News Letter* of the Sierra Leone United Christian Council was devoted to the meeting last summer of the Bo Conference, an annual interdenominational gathering. One of the main themes discussed was entitled "The Bible in Sierra Leone," introduced by the Rev. W. T. Harris.

"Dealing first with the Bible in English," reports the *News Letter*, "the speaker asked how far the Bible was being read, in places like Freetown and Bo, outside the

churches. How many school children had Bibles or Portions of their own? Indeed, how many of our schools had enough Bibles for the children in them? He mentioned a recent conference of teachers who had met to study religious knowledge (along with other subjects) and of whom only three had brought their Bibles. Did people realise that the Bible was an indispensable text book? In recent times there has been a very definite move back to the Bible on the part of the Roman Church.

"Mr. Harris then mentioned the very grave handicap about most Bibles in the English language, namely, that the translation is in the English of 300 years ago. We were putting into the hands of so many today who can speak and read English a version considerably more difficult to understand than certain other translations in general use. He wondered whether this conference might not ask the Bible Society to consider the publication of cheap Bibles in modern English.

"Mr. Harris then turned to the crying need for the Bible in the vernaculars. He showed, with the help of a great many illustrations, the difficulties of translation and the great amount of patience and devoted study that was needed to produce anything like a satisfactory translation. He mentioned that he had even been at church services where the Scriptures were translated from the English version by the preacher on the spot. This was no way to present the Word of God to our people.

"Turning to the work of Bible schools, Mr. Harris said that he was sure that the greatest stress should be laid on the study of the Scriptures in the vernacular. And it was not enough to study the Gospels only. 'A man,' he said, 'can be converted by reading the Gospels, but you need the Epistles to build a church.' Not only was the whole of the New Testament needed, but he himself was convinced that the Old Testament was needed as well. He told how some years ago he had tried to postpone any study of the Old Testament, but he had been forced to it in the end and then his students had exclaimed at the new light it threw on the New Testament."

The Conference then passed the following resolutions :—

(1) That this Conference requests the British and Foreign Bible Society to consider the possibility of making modern translations of the Bible in English (whole or in portions) available at similar prices to the A.V. and R.V. In particular we are interested in reports that the American Bible Society is endeavouring to make the Bible available in the new Revised Standard Version at lower costs. We also feel that New Testaments and Portions with a Sierra Leone vernacular and a modern English translation in parallel columns would be popular in this country.

(2) That this Conference, having a concern laid upon it for a more effective distribution of Bibles and Christian literature throughout the country, asks the United Christian Council to initiate plans whereby Bibles and Christian literature would be distributed by catechists, Christian shop-keepers, ordinary Church members, hospitals and churches at fixed rates of discount. It also asks the U.C.C. to consult with the Bible Society regarding the possibility of paid colporteurs.

(3) That this Conference requests the United Christian Council to issue a full graded syllabus for Scripture teaching in all Church schools (i.e. to go above Standard IV as at present).

Sudan

It is hoped at an early date to begin printing a new translation of St.

Luke's Gospel. The version has been translated into Sudanese colloquial Arabic, and is designed specially for use in the south. There, many whose native tongue is other than Arabic are now receiving elementary education in Arabic under the new regime, and this translation is designed to meet the needs of these new literates by giving them the Scriptures in a simple version they can understand. It is hoped to print master pages in Cairo, to add the vowelling by hand and to print the final version by photo-offset.

Sweden

The *Swedish Bible Society* has embarked on the second stage of a special collection of funds for the production of Tamil Bibles. A first effort, made in the Spring of 1954, raised one-tenth of the total amount needed. A booklet intended for Swedish clergy is to be issued in the near future, containing general information on Bible Society work and more specific news about the particular problems and tasks of the Bible Societies in connection with the Tamil-speaking area.

This is the first effort of the kind made by the Swedish Bible Society on such a large scale.

Switzerland

On 18th October, representatives of the Societies which form the *Federation of Swiss Bible Societies* met together in Bâle. The business of the meeting was dispatched under the chairmanship of the Rev. R. Vollenweider. With the appointment of a new President, Pastor Otto Naegeli of Rupperswil, the leadership of the Federation passes from the Bible Society of Bâle to that of Aargau.

Following an impressive report from Pastor Witschi of the Bâle Missionare Society, the new President outlined the tasks which lie ahead of the Swiss Bible Societies. In view of the fact that their responsibilities at home had been largely fulfilled, he said, the work of most of the Societies had in recent times come to a standstill. Yet the need for the distribution of the Bible in the world was so urgent, that the Christians of Switzerland ought to enter more fully into this task. The future development of our Bible Societies was largely dependent, he continued, on working together to fulfil this task. The Bible Societies must remind the countries which are well provided with Scriptures of their responsibility towards the countries and people who are without the Bible.

A lively discussion which followed Pastor Naegeli's address showed general agreement to enter more fully into co-operation with the U.B.S. and the missionary societies. The meeting was nevertheless aware of the difficulties of raising the necessary funds and of enlisting new members for the Societies in Switzerland. It was decided to produce a periodical news-bulletin in order to keep their supporters and parishes better informed. As a means of furthering interest for Bible Society work in Switzerland, it was decided to request the U.B.S. to make final arrangements for the holding of a regional conference in Switzerland in the summer of 1955.

*

The Bâle Bible Society celebrated its third jubilee on 24th October last. A special service took place in the Münster in the morning. The sermon was preached by Professor Ed. Thurneysen ; the chairman of the Society, the Rev. F. Hoch, gave a brief historical survey of the activity of the Bâle Bible Society. In the evening, at a well-attended meeting, the Rev. Dr. R. Bohren spoke on " The Word of God and modern man." He was followed by two lay-people witnessing to the place of the Bible and its reading in their lives. The meeting closed with a word of greeting delivered on behalf of the B.F.B.S. by Mr. K. Uhl, B.F.B.S. agent in Vienna, and a brief and urgent appeal by the

U.B.S. General Secretary for an increased participation of the Swiss Bible Societies in the world-wide missionary task of the Bible Societies.

*

The whole New Testament in the Zürich translation has recently been recorded on magnetic tape by the Soundfilms Library in Zürich. Fourteen spools were used. They are lent free of charge to the blind. The Zürich church gave considerable financial help in order to make this recording possible.

Syria and Lebanon

The total circulation in Syria-Lebanon this year, compared with 1953 and 1952, is as follows :—

	Bibles	*Testaments*	*Portions*	*Total*
1954	4,109	3,184	33,897	41,190
1953	3,936	3,011	32,807	39,754
1952	3,336	2,573	22,860	28,769

In these figures are included over 110 copies of the Roman Catholic or " Jesuit " version of the Arabic Bible, specially printed by them for the Bible Society, without notes, comments or apocrypha ; also about 4,000 copies of Arabic Luke in illustrated magazine form.

Contributions from individuals and churches have also shown an increase this year : 1,287.80 L.L. in 1951 ; 1,625.40 L.L. in 1953 ; 2,100.80 L.L. in 1954.

Owing to several factors the Bible Society work is growing normally in these lands. Amongst these factors are the following important means : Training of colporteurs and workers ; perfect collaboration with Christian institutions ; advertisements by posters in dailies and magazines, through the radio, by public lectures, slides, festivals, exhibitions, etc.

*

A magazine in Arabic, called " The Bible in the World," has begun publication and will be issued every two months by the Bible Lands Joint Agency, North and South. It will give news of Bible work throughout the world with particular emphasis on the Bible in the Arab world. Questions concerning the Arabic revision will also be discussed in its columns. Its outward appearance and size are similar to the B.F.B.S. magazine of the same name.

*

A new translation of the Book of Psalms was published last month in Arabic. It is a book in 8vo of more than 200 pages, nicely printed and on good paper. It was translated from the LXX by a Greek Orthodox layman, Mr. Rizkallah Araman, who also printed it at his own expense.

*

The question of the revision of the Arabic and Armenian translations of the Bible received special attention during the autumn. Dr. E. Nida, Translations Secretary of the American Bible Society, paid an extended visit to Beirut where he had full discussions on the subject with responsible people in Bible Society work in the Bible Lands, and with competent professors and religious workers.

United States of America

The *American Bible Society* suffered a great loss in the death of Frank H. Mann, on 11th October. Dr. Mann, one of the general secretaries of the Society, was responsible for the cultivation of the Society's support by the churches. He had been on the staff of the Bible Society for a few years before the first world war. He joined the Society again in 1942. In him the A.B.S. staff loses a most helpful colleague and one whose counsel was always listened to with great respect. Dr. Mann planned and conducted the annual meeting of the Advisory Council, a group representing more than fifty denominations which approve and support the work of the Society.

*

The Los Angeles Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., officially approved a Bible Reading Crusade for the period from October 3rd to October 31st, 1954. The Gospel of Mark in the Revised Standard Version was read during that period by members of all the 150 churches of the Los Angeles Presbytery. The pastors preached on texts chosen from the Gospel of Mark during the Crusade and the Gospels were distributed at church services, in prayer meetings, Sunday schools and other organisations, in pastoral visiting and in the visitation work of laymen and church groups. Approximately 50,000 Gospels were distributed through this Bible Reading Crusade.

*

Harper Brothers issued last October a new book, " Customs and Cultures—Anthropology for Christian Missions," by Dr. E. Nida, the Translations Secretary of the A.B.S. Out of his experiences and observations in many parts of the world, Dr. Nida brings examples of interesting customs which illustrate the fundamental principles he tries to evolve for a better understanding of other peoples. Although not dealing directly with problems of Bible translation, this book has a bearing on them by the fact that in teaching missionaries and candidates to discover behind the outward manifestation the real meaning of peoples' customs, it helps them to become more intimately familiar with the cultural background and the thinking of the people to whom they have to interpret the Word of God.

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On 28th October, two days after a visit by Bishop Berggrav, President of the U.B.S., to the A.B.S., where he addressed the staff, Bible House in New York received a visit from H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. This was one of her first engagements during her three weeks' tour in the United States. Expressing thanks for a red-leather bound Bible presented to her, the royal visitor told a small audience : " I can truly say that the King and I found great comfort and strength from our reading of the Bible." Various officers of the Bible Society spoke and stressed particularly, in a spirit of gratitude to God, the important part the Bible plays in the life and thinking of the American people. This common Bible (in the King James' version) is one of the most solid ties binding together the two English-speaking nations.

Special exhibits had been arranged for Her Majesty, who expressed great interest in them, and during her tour of the first floor of the building graciously signed the World Good Will Book. A special service, to which members of the Society's Board of Managers had been invited, was held on the library floor.

*

Secular magazines, as well as the religious press, gave good coverage last year on the A.B.S. World-wide Bible Reading Campaign. The "bookmarks " were distributed in payroll envelopes by a number of large organisations, one company using over 10,000 of the reading lists for their employees.

One hundred and sixty-eight television stations carried brief announcements for each of the 31 days of the programme. Each announcement was designed to encourage the regular reading of the Bible.

The December issue of *The Reader's Digest* had an article on " The Book of a Thousand Tongues," the book published by the A.B.S. in 1938. The article was followed by a short statement on the World-wide Bible Reading Campaign and included the reading list from Thanksgiving to Christmas. In view of the millions of readers of *The Reader's Digest*, this daily Scripture list will " meet " and, we hope, " influence " many new people.

*

The *Bible Society Record*, the house organ of the A.B.S., is entering its centennial year with the publication of its January 1955 issue. *The Record* is the oldest continuously published house organ in America. The U.B.S. BULLETIN would like to convey through these columns its best wishes for the year 1955 and for the century which lies ahead!

*

In 1954 the A.B.S. distributed 1,301,145 volumes of Scripture to the chaplains for circulation among the Armed Forces which brought the total since 1820, when the Society first donated Scriptures to the United States Navy, above 39,000,000 copies.

U.S.S.R.

Members of a German delegation invited by the Russian Orthodox Church to visit Moscow and other Russian cities during the summer of 1954, reported that, according to information they received, the Russian authorities and Church officials had consented to the photographing of more than 250 Greek New Testament manuscripts in Soviet libraries. These manuscripts had been unknown during the past half century, except to a few Orthodox scholars.

The oldest manuscripts thus photographed date from the seventh or eighth century A.D. Some of them were brought by Tischendorf to the imperial library in St. Petersburg, from his visits to the Sinai monasteries. The photographs will be available to students and scholars engaged in textual research in Russia, and will also be accessible to scholars abroad. State and Church are bearing the cost of the enterprise.

Miscellaneous

In reading the Reports adopted by the World Council of Churches at Evanston in August, one is conscious of the strong current or undercurrent of biblical conviction. Whether the words of the Book were cited or not, the pressure of the Word of God in the Bible was upon the Assembly.

In two or three places in the Reports this current comes explicitly to the surface. In the Report on "Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches," introductory paragraphs cite more than two-score biblical references to "Christ's Unifying Work." Near the end of the Report is this trenchant paragraph :—

"We must all listen together in the midst of our disunity to our one Lord speaking to us through Holy Scripture. This is a hard thing to do. We still struggle to comprehend the meaning and authority of Holy Scripture. Yet whenever we are prepared to undertake together the study of the Word of God and are resolved to be obedient to what we are told, we are on the way toward realising the oneness of the Church in Christ in the actual state of our dividedness on earth."

The Report on "The Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life" begins its treatment of "Communicating the Gospel" with these words :—

"We must remember that evangelism is God's work in which we are his agents. It is not our work and therefore we must wait upon Him in prayer and in meditation upon His Holy Word, that we may learn what He would have us to do."

*

The Universal Week of Prayer 1955, the 109th organised by the Evangelical Alliance, is centred on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The theme of the fifth day is : "The Spirit and the Word" and the notes particularly call for the prayers of the faithful for the work of the Bible Societies and for those working on the translation, production and distribution of the Scriptures.

*

A most able survey of the latest developments in efforts towards achieving a unification of the Braille

systems in the world has been prepared by Sir Clutha Mackenzie, chairman of the World Braille Council and published by U.N.E.S.C.O. Bible Societies have been pioneers in the publication of Braille volumes in many languages and the Bible Societies can still be listed among the bodies issuing the largest number of books for the blind.

In view of the many varieties of Braille symbols used in the different languages (the same symbols sometimes representing different letters in different languages, whereas letters common to various languages are sometimes rendered by different Braille symbols), U.N.E.S.C.O. set up, a number of years ago, a special department under the leadership of Sir Clutha Mackenzie, himself blind, whose function was to find ways and means by which the various Braille systems could be harmonised so that blind students wanting to learn and read books in foreign languages should not have to struggle with the additional difficulty caused by the confusion between symbols and letters.

The publication of "World Braille Usage," with its many charts, will greatly help those connected with the publication of books for the blind, particularly in non-European languages, to realise what progress has already been made towards evolving a universally acceptable plan for the application of Braille symbols to all languages.

THE BIBLE AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Argentina

IN a pastoral letter sent to all clergy of his diocese last June, the Bishop of San Luis, Msgr. Emilio De Pasquo, refers particularly to the preaching and healing campaign which took place during the Spring in Buenos Aires, attacking these manifestations and protestantism in general ("the fruit of this poisonous tree" being "the situation in which poor humanity now finds itself"), and inviting "heartily our dissident brethren to reflect. The mother, the Holy Church, who hopes for their return, is by no means going to take the Bible out of their hands, nor will she tell them that its reading is forbidden, as some injuriously slander her; on the contrary, the light will lighten them which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself puts into their hands when he says to Peter: 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.'"

In concluding his pastoral letter, the Bishop reminds his clergy of their duty to make the Holy Scriptures revered and read by the faithful:—

"In order, precisely, to make profitable use of the interest recently aroused in the Holy Gospel, we want to remind our clergy of the provisions we have sought to establish in the past, namely:—

"(1) At Holy Mass the Gospel appointed for the Sunday or the feast day will be read and the faithful will be warned beforehand that the reading of the Word of God is to take place and that in reverence of it the assembly is to stand. Following this, a short commentary or exhortation shall be given.

"(2) At all meetings of religious institutions, before dealing with the subjects on the agenda, there shall be a short study and commentary on a passage from the Holy Gospel, the reading of which shall be listened to reverently, the congregation standing, following the commendable custom of the Catholic Action of Argentina and of the Catholic Workers' Youth.

" (3) Finally, we ordain that in all parishes of our diocese, a Bible Day be organised during the present year.

" The curates section shall communicate to us the day of the month on which they intend to celebrate their Bible Day together with the proposed programme.

" The aims of the Bible Day are: to make known the Holy Scriptures, particularly the Gospels; to circulate copies of the written Word of God to every family; to teach people to read and enjoy the Word of Jesus. The motto of Bible Day shall be 'The Gospel in every home'."

*

Following the establishment of the " Biblical Association of Catamarca " (a northern province of Argentina), which is particularly interested in the promotion of Bible days, an organisation was founded last May in Catamarca called " People's Biblical Movement," whose aim is " to bring the mass of the people to a better and more profound knowledge of Christ by means of the regular reading of the Holy Scriptures, with appropriate explanations. . . . " In connection with this effort, a Bible Week took place in Catamarca last September and Roman Catholic circles interested in that movement (particularly the " Revista Biblica con seccion Liturgica," from which this information is taken) hope that the campaign will spread to other cities and areas.

Belgium

Since the war, the publishing house of the Abbey of Maredsous has issued over one million Portions, about 100,000 New Testaments and over 100,000 Bibles in a new translation. It has now added to this achievement an edition of the Bible in a large format. This new Bible (crown quarto size), is printed in two columns and includes over sixty photographic illustrations taken from sculptures in French cathedrals. A number of these reproductions are being published for the first time.

This edition of the Bible has just over 1,000 pages, including the Apocrypha. Unlike earlier editions, all the notes are printed together at the end of the volume.

This luxury edition is sold at 950 Belgian francs (U.S. $19, £6 15s. 9d.), in an imitation leather cover.

*

" This exhibition has been planned not for those who 'know,' but for those who *wish* to know," states the pamphlets introducing the Bible exhibition prepared by Dom Paul Passelecq of the Abbey of Maredsous, Belgium. This venture is a new step taken by that biblically minded group in order to encourage members of the Roman Catholic Church to get better acquainted with the Holy Scriptures.

The aim of the exhibition is to give the visitor a general view of the historical and geographical setting of the people among whom the Bible was born, to give factual information regarding language, composition, historical period, the meaning and value for Christians of the Bible, and in this way to create a greater respect for the Word of God and to help towards a wider and deeper knowledge of the message of God to mankind.

The exhibition is divided into three parts: Part I, Biblical facts, gives the authors of the books of the Bible, the date at which they were written, their historical and geographical setting, the main events of the Bible and the place of redemption, of the Gospel and of the Church in the extension of the history of Christendom up to the present day. Part II, Spiritual Realities, the eyes of the visitor are opened to the spiritual landscape of the Bible; certain main ideas of the Bible are focused upon as illustrating the essential achievement of the Bible: the revelation of the Person of Jesus Christ. The purpose of Part III, Scripture distribution, is to illustrate the bringing of the written message to the faithful and evokes the efforts made by Christians of all confessions

to spread the Word of God throughout the world.

The 32-page pamphlet which serves as a guide and reproduces in black and white the 24 panels of the exhibition, also provides a valuable handbook on the Bible and its message for those who have had little contact with it.

France

A recent issue of the *Revue de l'Evangelisation*, published by the Société centrale d'Evangélisation, the evangelistic agency of the French Reformed Church, is devoted to the evangelistic efforts of the Roman Catholic Church in France. Miss C. Jullien, the author of the survey reviewing the activities of the Association catholique de la Jeunesse Française, has included one paragraph on the " Young people of the A.C.J.F. and the Bible.:—"

In every branch of the French Catholic Youth Association (Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française), the basis of common action and thought on the part of its members is " renewal of life." This renewal takes place in the light of the Gospel. The A.B.C. of the method is to meet every situation that comes to one's notice, every attitude adopted, every decision that has to be taken, with the teaching of the Gospel.

For the Jocists (members of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique—the Catholic organisation for young workers) and all those engaged in manual work, this reference to the Bible is short (a quarter of an hour at each meeting), concise, and gives relatively little of the total view and little systematic instruction; the point of departure of all thought is expression and is directed towards taking a decision and action.

Among the Jécistes (members of the Jeunesse Estudiatine Catholique) deeper thinking is encouraged. Carefully-prepared biblical card indexes are issued, shared and used by the leaders.

However, even with the members of the Teachers' Teams care is taken to avoid systematic, theological, catechetical instruction. Commentaries on the Gospels and the Epistles occupy an important place in their publications and meetings, but theological teaching as such appears only in notes and in the form of bibliography.

Before the war the Bible was almost a forbidden book for the average Jéciste. Since the war, however, not only has the reading of the Gospels and the Epistles become usual, but each Jéciste owns, or aims at owning, his own Bible.

For the Jocistes, the situation is slightly different. The reading of the Gospels and Epistles is also current, but the Old Testament remains a somewhat difficult and partially closed book.

In the journal of the Teachers' Teams of this year we find this comforting paragraph: "A pocket Bible! The Abbey of Maredsous has just taken an initiative which is most welcome. Our Bibles are cumbersome to carry about and yet we have always wanted to have them with us wherever we go. Now our wish can be fulfilled!"

AUDIO-VISUAL AID NOTES

THE latest film produced by the Moody Bible Institute, entitled *The Stones Cry Out*, has an emphasis on archæology. It takes some of the cities described by the Old Testament prophets—Babylon, Tyre and Sidon, Petra and Edom—and shows how their destruction as foretold by the prophets was fulfilled. For example, in the case of Petra, carved out of solid rock and for many hundreds of years considered indestructible, a new trade route that was opened up which by-passed the city caused it to be deserted, and today to lie in ruins. The film concludes with a 10-minute sermon on the way in which the Old Testament prophecies

came true and culminated in the appearance of the greatest of the prophets.

Since most of the shots are of the scenes of these cities, the film (40 minutes, in colour) is more suitable for theological students or adults and young people than for children, and its uses are more informative and historical than evangelistic.

*

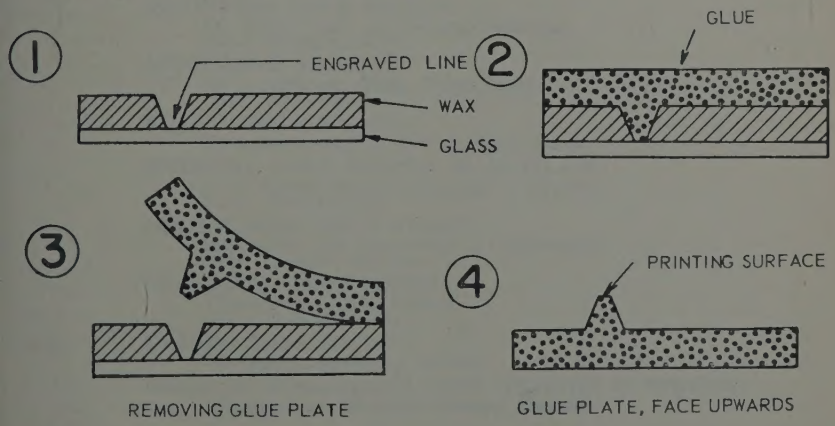
During the U.B.S. meetings at Haywards Heath, Eastbourne and London, Mr. Ragatz of the American Bible Society made magnetic tape recordings of John 3 : 16, read in some forty languages. He will make duplicate tapes available at the cost of the tape. If any are interested he asks that they let him know at once. These duplicates are available in full track at $3\frac{3}{4}$, $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 15 inches per second speed. They may also be had in half track at $3\frac{3}{4}$ or $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches per second, or all on $\frac{1}{4}$-in. magnetic tape. Anyone interested in securing such a duplicate of the above material should communicate with Mr. Henry Ragatz, 450 Park Avenue, New York 22, New York, giving the specifications of speed and track width.

*

Reference was made in a previous number (BULLETIN No. 19, p. 34) to an issue of " Education Abstracts " (vol. VI, No. 4, published by U.N.E.S.C.O.) dealing with Visual Aids in Fundamental Education. In the same series, the general title of which is Educational Studies and Documents, a special number in June 1953 was devoted to " How to print posters." This issue gives an extremely clear description of a simple and inexpensive method of printing home-made posters from a glue plate. The following short description, reproduced from the booklet itself, gives a very general idea of the work involved in that method, which is explained at length in the booklet. This method has been tried and used on a large scale in Latin America by groups engaged in fundamental education :—

" The process consists of two fundamental elements : a wax plate on which the picture to be reproduced is engraved, and a glue plate which is cast in the wax matrix. The glue plate, after it has cooled and solidified, serves as the printing-plate.

" The wax plate is made by pouring a mixture of paraffin wax and beeswax on to a glass pane so as to form a more or less uniform layer, 3 mm. thick.



"The picture to be reproduced on the poster is drawn and engraved on this wax plate, thus giving a wax cast (fig. 1, see page 47). A mixture of glue and glycerine, melted in a *double boiler*, is then poured over the wax cast so as to cover it with a layer, 2 cm. thick (fig. 2). After cooling, for approximately eight hours, the glue becomes consistent and flexible like soft rubber.

"The glue plate is removed by raising one end of the solidified layer (fig. 3). The latter's lower surface, on which the wax engraving has left an impression, is the printing glue surface or printing-plate (fig. 4)."

No doubt this method could be used successfully for Bible Society posters in areas where ordinary printing is costly or impracticable. Posters of all sizes can then be produced.

Plastic screens

Screens are generally one of the most cumbersome pieces of visual aid equipment. Churches and the Bible Society in Belgium have been using with success screens made of a flexible plastic material which can easily be packed. The stuff is more shiny than linen and gives a better result in the projection of films. These screens may be folded and, if carefully packed, do not show creases. The cost per square metre is Belgian frs. 320 (approx. £2. 6s. 0d.).

*

Representatives of various European Bible Societies, who have been invited to Homburg (Saar) at the end of January (see p. 38) will take the opportunity of consulting on ways and means of furthering co-operation in the use of audio-visual aids.

Films, filmstrips and other materials will be shown and discussed with a view to finding out how future productions of a similar kind might be prepared in such a way as to meet the needs and satisfy the taste of a large a public as possible.

Experience already gathered in this field by the use in different countries of some of the films and filmstrips to be examined, makes this 'workshop' most timely.

The Rev. F. Visser, visual aid expert of the Netherlands Bible Society, has undertaken to prepare the agenda. He will welcome any suggestions which would help towards the achievement of co-operation between Bible Societies in this field.

MEMBER SOCIETIES

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
450, Park Avenue, New York 22, N.Y., U.S.A.
Cables: Biblehouse, New York.

AUSTRIAN BIBLE COMMITTEE,
Breitegasse 8, Vienna VII, Austria.
Cables: Bibelhaus, Wien

BELGIAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
34, rue d'Arlon, Brussels, Belgium.

BIBLE SOCIETY OF INDIA, PAKISTAN AND CEYLON,
No. A/1 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore 1, South India.
Cables: Testaments, Bangalore.

BRAZILIAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
Caixas Postais 73 e 454, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,
146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4, England.
Cables: Testaments, London.

B.F.B.S. IN AUSTRALIA,
95, Bathurst Street, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.
Cables: Testaments, Sydney.

B.F.B.S. IN CANADA,
122, Bloor Street West, Toronto 5, Ontario, Canada.
Cables: Testaments, Toronto.

B.F.B.S. IN NEW ZEALAND,
128, Featherston Street, P.O. Box 930, Wellington, C.1, New Zealand
Cables: Testaments, Wellington.

DANISH BIBLE SOCIETY,
Hersegade 9, Roskilde, Denmark

FEDERATION OF SWISS BIBLE SOCIETIES
12, Florastrasse, Basle, Switzerland.

FINNISH BIBLE SOCIETY,
Yliopistonkatu 29, Turku-Abo, Finland.

FRENCH BIBLE COMMITTEE,
58, rue de Clichy, Paris, 9e, France.

HIBERNIAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
41 & 42, Dawson Street, Dublin, Ireland.

ICELANDIC BIBLE SOCIETY,
Reykjavik, Iceland.

INDONESIAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
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Cables: Biblehouse, Jacarta.

JAPAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
No. 2 Shichome, Ginza, Tokyo, Japan.
Cables: Bibles, Tokyo.

KOREAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
Kwangwhamoon P.O. Box 30, Seoul, Korea.

NATIONAL BIBLE SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND,
5, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh 2, Scotland.
Cables: Bibles, Edinburgh.

NETHERLANDS BIBLE SOCIETY,
Herengracht 366, Amsterdam C. Netherlands.
Cables: Bijbelhuis, Amsterdam.

NORWEGIAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
Munchsgate 2, Oslo, Norway.
Cables: Bibelselskapet, Oslo.

SWEDISH BIBLE SOCIETY,
Stortorget 1, Stockholm, Sweden.

UNION OF EVANGELICAL BIBLE SOCIETIES IN GERMANY
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